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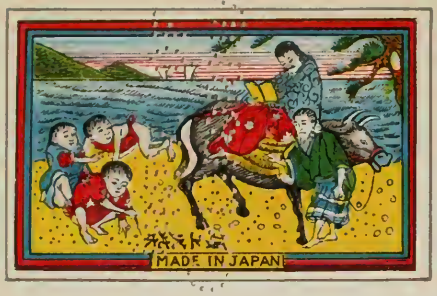

MATCH LABELS.

(From the Author's collection.)

THE

MYSTIC FLOWERY LAND.

Being a True Account of an Englishman's Travels and Adventures in China

BY

CHARLES J. H. HALCOMBE.
Late of Imperial maritime Customs, China.
Author of "Called Out," "Tales of Far Cathay,"
"The Love of a Former Life,"
etc., etc.

WITH NOTES BY THE AUTHOR.

AND NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED.

LONDON:
LUZAC & Co.
Publishers to the India Office.
1899.

DS709
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Printed by Roeloffzen-Hubner & van Santen,
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To

MY NUMEROUS EUROPEAN AND CHINESE FRIENDS

IN

THE IMPERIAL MARITIME CUSTOMS SERVICE

AND ABOARD

THE COASTING STEAMERS IN CHINA

THIS WORK IS

MOST AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

IN REMEMBRANCE

OF MANY BYGONE HAPPY DAYS SPENT IN THEIR COMPANY.

"Friendship, mysterious cement of the soul,
Sweetener of life, and solder of society,
I owe thee much: thou hast deserved of me
Far, far beyond what I can ever pay."

755657

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

PREFACE.

In launching a second edition of this work upon a lengthy voyage, I have much pleasure in expressing my thanks to the press and public for the encouragement and support they have accorded to it; and though fully conscious of the many imperfections therein, I trust it may be the means of enlisting the sympathy of my countrymen with the downtrodden "Children of Han" and their cause, and of making them more familiar with the beautiful and interesting types of scenery and architecture peculiar to the "Middle Kingdom". In that far empire—whose peace-loving thrifty people have, like the Israelites of old, long been held in bondage—a mighty struggle, similar to the great Taiping rebellion, will in all probability soon take place for the purpose of expelling the avaricious and tyrannical usurpers of the throne and re-establishing upon it the lawful heirs and descendents of the venerated Ming emperors. I sincerely trust that all those who are interested in the welfare of China will unite with the Reform Party in striving to deliver the Chinese from the hands of their oppressors by endeavouring to prevent any intervention which might prove disastrous to their justifiable cause.

One of my reviewers sagely observes that "it would in no way have detracted from the value of the book if I could have resisted a Wegg-like inclination to 'drop into poetry' on the smallest provocation." With all due deference I beg to submit that—when considering the impression I wished to give of the country

I was writing about, and the circumstances which influenced and inspired much of the composition—the poetry is decidedly *in suo proprio loco:* for, to use the words of a gifted writer, "the East is the land of poetry. Here nature is found in her happiest moods: she lavishes all the tints of her wonderful palette on her gorgeous sunrises and sunsets; she instals her electric lights—the bright stars—in the blue depths of the unfathomable sky—and, so pure is the atmosphere, that one can see beyond their clear shining into the illimitable space; and her full-orbed moon floods the whole landscape with a silvery light but seldom seen in the West. The sun glows with such an intense heat that, aided by the tropical showers, the earth is clad with a hot-house growth of plants and shrubs; nor are her grander moods unrevealed to man, for towering crag and rugged mountain hem in the meandering river; and the soft lights of sunset play amidst their gloomy rocks and sheltered ravines, while the noon-day clouds cast passing shadows on the lovely scene."

Without further introduction I must now ask the reader to accompany me in imagination to those far-off shores of the "Mystic Flowery Land," hoping that the tour may prove an interesting and perhaps instructive one.

C. J. H. H.

Herne Bay, Kent.
August 1898.

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THE MYSTIC FLOWERY LAND.

I.—IN SHANGHAI.

AT the close of a bright May afternoon, in the year 1887, the trim little barquentine—which had borne me safely across the summer seas from the sandy shores of Africa—stood in once more towards the welcome land—the mystic "Flowery Land," or "Celestial Empire," of which I had heard and half-incredulously read so much about in the time-honoured travels of Marco Polo, and where the wonders of an ancient and ingenious civilization tempt the eager traveller to explore.

Onward we sailed, with square yards and wind on the starboard quarter. The nearer we approached the low-lying land the yellower became the waters, until we swiftly, and almost silently, glided into the Huang-pu river; and the tired eye, long accustomed to the dreary ocean deserts, was gladdened and relieved by masses of bright green foliage waving above the long rushes that line the muddy banks, past which we quickly sped, occasionally obtaining a glimpse of the surrounding country, which teemed with well-cultivated garden patches and paddy-fields. These were studded at intervals with thick clumps of graceful bamboos, from amongst whose bright foliage the thatched or tiled roof of many a snug little farm-house peeped out with pleasing homeliness and simplicity.

Running close under the formidable embanked fortifications, we soon descried a straggling town that comprised several whitewashed buildings, above which the tricoloured French flag was flying. Here I saw the first Celestial it had ever been my fortune to behold

in the archaic land and comely dress of his forefathers, and with his glossy length of carefully plaited queue, with silken-tasseled end, almost trailing on the ground.

I did not admire his cunning and impassive countenance, with its upward-curving brows, small watchful eyes, and sensual mouth which seemed to mechanically shape itself into a half-perceptible sneer as he regarded our smart little craft, and no doubt unfavourably compared it with the primitive box-bowed junks of his own proud land, several of which we soon passed—with their unwieldy-looking lateen sails, their shroudless, raking masts, high, gaudily-embellished sterns, and low eyed-bows. No junk would be complete, or even tenable, without the large ogling eyes on either side of her head; and if you ask a Chinaman the reason of this, he will answer with his self-convincing adage, "no can see, no can savee!" So implicitly does he believe in this ocular demonstration that he will unflinchingly try to sail or *yuhloa** his vessel across the bows of a steamer going at full speed, just to show their talismanic power off to the heartily despised *fan-quai*, or "foreign devil," as they universally denominate all foreigners. Hence the number and frequency of collisions between European and native craft, generally with disastrous results to the latter.

But the busy mind does not dwell for any lengthened period on one subject, however interesting it may be, when one is entering upon the thought-inspiring sights and subjects of a new country. So we must quickly pass along up the broadening river towards the pretty Italian-like villas that began to show themselves on the starboard bow as we approached the port of Shanghai, which is situated about twelve miles inland on the west bank of the fast-flowing river, and lies in lat. 31° 14′ N. and long. 121° 28′ E., being built on and surrounded by a vast alluvial plain, intersected with numerous lakes and streams, and relieved at long intervals by a few isolated hills.

Several brightly-painted shoe-shaped boats, or *sampans*, now dashed alongside, and in a moment the ship's side was one mass of struggling humanity. Dozens of half-nude coolies, bum-boat-

* To scull with a long oar or sweep over the stern.

men, and respectably-dressed Chinese tradesmen swarmed up the sides on long bamboo boat-hooks and ropes, like a troop of demoralised monkeys, jabbering, yelling, scrambling, and fighting, as they gained the deck and rushed aft to *chin chin*† the captain, whom they obsequiously addressed in approved pidgin English.* Amongst the crowd were Jack Ah Sin, the "numba one washee man;" Tom Ah Fat, the "velly square tailor," who had, according to his own unbiased statement, "long time savee capitain," whom he was graciously pleased to designate as a "numba one genteman," who had most commendably "pay poor tailor man good chance allo time." Then came Mr. Ching Fong, the indefatigable compradore, who also "saveed" the worthy skipper and seemed very anxious to ascertain "what ting he wanchee—what ting he likee chow-chow," and was most desirous that he should "come look see housee" where "allo ting have got."

All these very honest people spoke and gesticulated at the same time as they tried to outdo one another in luring the half-distracted captain into all manner of profitable bargains and inexpensive outlays. One burly "Celestial" artist, with brush in one hand and canvas in the other, almost forced the unfortunate skipper through the glass skylight, so eager was he to paint his bewhiskered face, for the small sum of "six dolla." But in vain did he gaze with rapture on the sun-tanned countenance of the old man of the sea who had so suddenly become "too muchee handsome," and with the rest he was at length driven over the side at the rope's end. But in spite of the fast descending blows and the suddenness of his despatch, he smilingly departed with many gracious compliments and humble thanks, fully intending to renew the acquaintance on the first favourable opportunity.

We were fortunate enough to have a berth allotted to us at once, alongside the old Ningpo Wharf, as it is called, which is situated at the lower, or east end of the settlement in Hongkew.

Directly the hawsers were made fast and the gangway placed

† Words of salutation used in the same manner and in place of "Good-day."

* The word *pidgin* is the Chinese pronunciation of the word "business." Pidgin-English is a middle course gibberish—English words adapted to the defective pronunciation of the Chinese.

in position, I gladly stepped ashore, and was almost immediately surrounded by a motley crowd of indifferently-clad coolies who were stading between the shafts of their respective *rickshas*, which looked like miniature hansom cabs, with movable waterproof hoods.

Jumping into one of these handy little vehicles, I told the wiry "Celestial" who acted as my steed to take me to the nearest hotel. He seemed to understand. With a knowing nod and a diabolical grin, he firmly gripped the shafts near the end, and, raising them to a level, made a few preliminary hops and jerky pulls which settled, as we gained way, into a steady trot; and off we went at an incredibly smart pace.

Once clear of the wharves we entered the Broadway Road which runs parallel with the river, which is hidden from view by native shops that line both sides of the fairly broad thoroughfare.

The sun had now gone down, and darkness had—as it always does in tropical lands—suddenly closed in; but with little effect, for the whole place was beautifully illuminated with electric lights which opened and enhanced to my wondering gaze an entirely new panorama of quaint oriental life.

On either side were shops, each one with its long black, red or gold signboard, with the proprietor's "honourable name" inscribed in large gold or vermilion characters. These bright-coloured boards were suspended above the footway in a most conspicuous and obtrusive manner, foreboding danger to the head of any unwary pedestrian who might happen to be above the average height.

Independent of this, each shop had its own peculiar transparent paper lantern with the proprietor's name painted on in red—red being a favourite colour, as it is emblematical of life—as white is, to them, of death. These fantastic lanterns, besides answering well as an advertisement, and showing to advantage the exterior of the shop and its wares, greatly improve the aspect of the street.

Although the pavement was fairly broad, there seemed to be very little room on it owing to the many small stalls which occupy a portion of the frontage of nearly every shop, whose tenant charges the stall-holder for this privilege, and thus reduces his own rental by leasing public property—committing a nuisance

HAWKER AND BUYER.

with impunity. For no sane Chinaman would ever dream of noticing or commenting upon it, although he is invariably obliged to walk in the gutters or the road. All one to him, however, it is of no consequence; he would and perhaps does the same, and his most venerated and exemplary father did so before him, and likewise his forefathers who were all good men and philosophers. It cannot be helped, so it must be endured. And no one disputes it, except the boorish and irreverent "foreign devil" (fan-quai) who was born with such despicably barbarous notions, who is always rudely peering ahead into the impenetrable future, instead of looking reverently back and living like an exemplary son of Han and disciple of Confucius—always in the glorious past, where lies the source of all inspiration, of all comfort, and of life and prosperity to himself and his incomparable country.

I soon came to the conclusion that the Chinese are, and always have been, and will be to the end of all time, a desperately queer lot. And, as will be seen, my swift-footed ricksha-man was by no means an exception to the generality of them. On approaching a finely-built bridge, he turned off sharp to the left, and set me down before the Astor House Hotel, hardly allowing me time to alight before he commenced bullying me in approved "Celestial" style and language for an exorbitant fare, knowing, or accurately guessing, that I "no savee how fashion Chinee."

On getting some change at the hotel bar I offered him 50 cents—just five times too much. But he would not take it, and set up such a hue and cry for "one dolla," that I re-entered the hotel and placed the matter in the hands of the Chinese compradore, who gave him his proper fare—ten cents; and he left without a murmur, to wait for me.

An obsequious and attentive "boy" (all male servants, whether young or old, are called "boys" in China) showed me up to a pleasantly situated bedroom which overlooked the river and the road.

Having completed my toilet by dressing in a light flannel suit, I descended to the dining-room, and did ample justice to the many courses that were served. Then finding it unpleasantly warm indoors, and wishing to further explore this "Model settlement,"

I lit a cigar, and sauntered forth in quest of diversion and amusement.

Out from some dark corner came my friend, the ricksha-man, who politely motioned me to be seated. I did so, and once more found myself careering along in a dangerously reckless manner.

On gaining the Broadway Road, he turned to the left, resuming our original course, and climbed the arched bridge that spans the Soochow Creek, which marks the boundary of the American concession in Hongkew, separating it from the English settlement, and wends its devious way to the far-famed city of Soochow which I shall visit with the reader at a later period.

As we gained the top of the bridge a pretty sight unfolded itself—and then enfolded us. Off went the ricksha down the incline at a breakneck pace. I held on to the frail sides of the swaying vehicle with considerable interest, expecting every moment to be precipitated into the muddy creek or shot into the air to alight among the topmost branches of the beautiful trees that appeared on either side, and which I was quite unable to adequately appreciate and admire owing to the suddenness of my admission. Not until my frisky steed moderated his pace did I recover my presence of mind sufficiently to be conscious of the sublimity of the scene, or of the fragrance of the air which had become redolent with the perfume of rare tropical plants and flowers, diffused by gentle airs, which made the evening agreeable after the sultriness of day.

I had heard that the Town Band would play in the gardens at 9 p.m.; so, as it was not yet time, I let my ricksha coolie continue his somewhat impetuous course through the English settlement.

On the right-hand side, at the foot of the bridge, and at the commencement of the Bund, lay the enclosure of the British Consulate, which is separated from the roadway by a low wall, and, from the Vice Consul's and Interpreter's private residences, by a shrubbery and lawn. The extensive grounds which surround it are carefully kept and artistically laid out, and the lawn is much patronised by tennis players.

Keeping along the Bund in a southernly direction, we passed

a long range of magnificent buildings occupied by Messrs. Siemssen, Jardine Matheson, Butterfield and Swire, and other notable mercantile firms, not forgetting the splendid offices of the P. and O. Company. In the centre of these European houses the fantastic roofs and curved gables of the Custom House—then occupying an ancient Chinese temple—rose up in startling though stately comparison from amongst them, and improved the imposing frontage which the English houses make.

At the southern extremity of this settlement, overlooking the river, and the opposite shore of Pootung, and almost on the bank of the Yang-king-Pang Creek, which marks the commencement of the French Concession, stands the pretentious four-storied English Club, looming above its neighbours. This was erected at a cost of 121,000 taels by a body of ambitious shareholders in the prosperous years of 1863-64, and upon whose spacious verandah, and in whose stately halls the *élite* of this "Model Settlement" meet to enjoy the social pleasures good company ever affords.

I was not a little surprised to see numbers of smart carriages, landaus, victorias, broughams, dog-carts, and other fashionable equipages, with fine, gaily caparisoned horses, darting to and fro along the smooth and spacious roads. Some were occupied by wealthy merchant princes, Government officials, or their stately ladies, and others by the prettiest of "Celestial" *demoiselles*, with their dark almond eyes which hardly deign to notice you while passing swiftly by like a cloud of gorgeous butterflies, in embroidered silk attire.

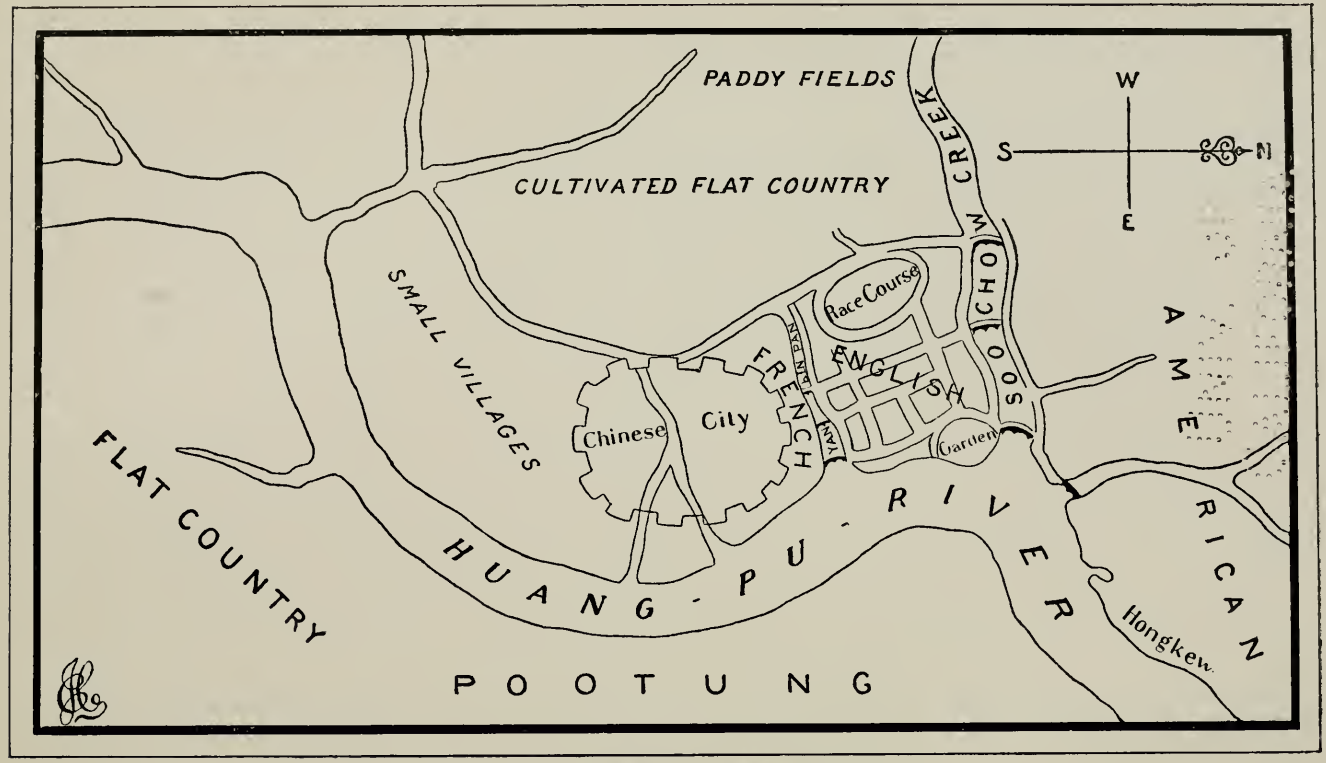
Having seen almost sufficient for one night, and not wishing to enter the gloomy precincts of the French Concession, with its unpretentious buildings of miscellaneous architecture and uncertain date, which look cheerlessly out upon a dismal avenue of scraggy trees, beneath whose meagre shade a few world-forgotten *gensd'armes* saunter about in comparative exile, no doubt often wishing themselves home once more in far-off "La Belle France"—I told my humble conveyer to take me back. He did so, turning like a tired hack, and making a final bolt for home.

When we arrived at the gardens, however, I paid him off and entered by a winding path through the shrubbery. On gaining the

centre of the grounds, upon whose oval, sloping lawn the bandstand is situated, I found, to my surprise, that one of the "boys" from the hotel was patiently awaiting my arrival with a long cane chair. Taking a seat like the rest, I lay back smoking a cigar, enjoying the somewhat cool night air, and listening to the band, which was discoursing some very pleasing selections.

From my position I commanded a good view of the river Huang-pu, which ran close past the east bank of the garden, and the moon was high in the heavens, shining gladly down on the pleasant and not unrustic scene.

It was indeed a pretty sight: the calm, shadowy waters, and the picturesque gardens, bathed in the soft light, and adorned, not only by exquisite tropical plants and flowers, but also by numbers of fair and faultlessly-dressed ladies, sauntering to and fro in their varied costumes between the shady groves, where the fragrant air and the whisper of subdued voices were highly suggestive of a "Midsummer night's dream," and the meeting of the fairies, when Cupid's shaft is silently "quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon," or launched at the heart of some fair Helena with delightful precision which imbues her with love immortal, and adorns those lily-blossom cheeks with the first blush of maiden joy—so highly significant of an invitation to "ask Papa" or some other near and dear guardian who lives in this matter-of-fact age, and wears the orthodox "frills" so hurtful and injurious to love's young summer dream.



PLAN OF SHANGHAI

Half Mile Scale

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II.—PECULIAR CHARACTERISTICS.

NEXT morning I was awakened by the attentive "boy" who had attached himself to me on my arrival. Opening the door, he called to me in a loud voice, "Massa, you wantchee chow-chow? Jest now blong bar parze ten, nearly leben!" By which he meant to convey, in the most correct "pidgin" English, that breakfast was ready and that it was getting late.

It was a beautiful day, and the fresh morning breeze fanned the scent of exotic flowers about my bed, which had been haunted, through the silent hours of night, by legions of hungry and daring mosquitoes, whose tuneful but monotonous hum makes you feel drowsy and tired. But they always do hum when prospecting about your person for a soft spot, and they generally perch on your nose and begin preliminary operations there, with disastrous results to their victim and eventually to themselves when he becomes better acquainted with their habits and more accurate in his aim.

Never strike a mosquito until his proboscis is firmly imbedded in your flesh and he is about to regale himself, or you will surely miss him. For it is better to wait and make sure of your prey than to drive it to extremities; for once it becomes demoralized and desperate it will worry you fearfully all night until its voracious appetite is appeased. It will feed itself by taking sundry snacks from the most unprotected parts, keeping you in suspense and agony during the short intervals while his confederates engage your attention.

It is bad policy to despise or to underestimate the power of an

enemy. This must also be borne in mind and observed when dealing with mosquitoes. Never turn upon them in blind fury, and imagine that you can exterminate the whole race by a vigorous and untimely attack. Face them bravely, and, above all, stoically —as you would a crowd of bullies—take one at a time, and wipe them out in a scientific manner.

Among the Chinese classics is to be found a short story teaching filial piety by illustrating the exemplary maternal love of a Chinese youth of past ages. It tells how once a venerable lady was greatly troubled by mosquitoes which gave her no rest, but who was equally blessed by having a kind-hearted and dutiful son, who, every night before his mother retired, nobly lay in her bed, allowing the mosquitoes to draw his blood until satisfied. Through his commendable devotion she ever afterwards enjoyed good rest. It seems evident that mosquito-curtains were not used in those days.

After breakfast I went out and paid a visit to the editor of the *North China Daily News*, with whom I had a long interview, which ended in my becoming a member of the editorial staff, a very handsome suite of apartments above the offices being placed at my disposal, also suitable conveyances.

I take this opportunity of testifying my unprejudiced opinion that—with the one exception of the *Hong Kong Daily Press*—the *North China Daily News** is by far the most authentic, and most ably edited journal in the Far East.

Having a few days' grace to accustom myself to the place and get settled down before commencing my duties, and having seen my rooms, I set about the purchase of necessary furniture, as I had no intention of remaining at an hotel longer than possible, it being a somewhat expensive luxury.

* My esteemed friend and literary *confrère*, Mr. O'Shea, has recently founded a new journal in Shanghai, entitled *The Chinese Gazette*. His great experience and well-known ability will no doubt make it a valuable source of information on Eastern matters—especially as, according to his own statement, he has "secured the co-operation of many of the leading writers in China, and has sources of information in Peking, Tientsin, Hankow, and the chief Treaty Ports as well as in the chief news centres in the interior of China."

The next important business was to procure a good "boy" and a strong ricksha coolie. The latter I soon found in the person of my frisky acquaintance of the previous night, who seemed highly elated at the prospect of this unexpected rise in life. Indeed he cut some very queer capers when admiring the new white-braided clothes I had made for him, as it is customary and very necessary—if only for the sake of cleanliness, and to distinguish him from the rest of his unwashed kind—to have a uniform for your private ricksha or chair coolies.

Many boys, of all sorts and conditions, presented themselves before me, each with his carefully preserved "number one" testimonials, all of which appeared in the latest stages of decomposition, and were very much soiled with the wear and tear of age, having no doubt seen good service and again been borrowed for the occasion at a small cost.

Among the applicants, one wily-looking, old-fashioned "boy" said he was the most trustworthy servant to be found on that side of the globe. In proof of this assertion, he proudly handed me a most ancient and dilapidated English document, from a perusal of which I learnt that a certain Mr. Smith had sold one How Shin an elderly donkey for the sum of eight dollars.

He seemed very surprised when I informed him of this transaction, and agreed with me that it was "no good pidgin." Then he went out to look for the man who had wronged him so.

After much careful deliberation and enquiry, I selected a young Cantonese boy named Ah Way, who was in my service during the whole of my thirteen months' sojourn in Shanghai, and was a fairly honest and intelligent lad.

I should not, however, consider this work complete if I omitted to give the reader some idea characteristic of these native servants, who play so prominent a part in the domestic life of all European residents in the Far East.

The Chinese "boy," I must tell you, is an individual different in many rspects to most mortals. There hardly exists a foreigner out there who has not now, or has not had at some former time, one whom he thinks, or thought, was a paragon of honesty and

obedience. Yet, when you come to think of it, what a perfect fraud the boy is!

To begin with, he is your factotum, servant, butler, interpreter, and also your treasurer for small amounts, such as paying the chair coolies their hire, and any other incidental expenses he cheerfully meets for you. Never is he out of funds, rather than be so he will draw on next month's wages, and, with a deprecating smile, childlike and bland, respectfully request an order on the compradore.

At the month's end a long account is presented to you, generally written by the office boy, purporting to be an accurate statement of your expenditure, which at first sight, and judging by its total, you rightly consider monstrous. Then you turn round upon him, prepared to fire into him a heavy charge of pent-up indignation, and he mildly enquires, in an unperturbed voice, which item you find fault with. You become painfully aware that you have not "a leg to stand upon." Minute items, one after the other, are there in tedious length, each too small to admit of much retrenchment. For how can a sweeping reduction be made of such charges as "dog-chow, 50 cents; old coat makee new, 40 cents;" &c., &c.? Even when you do think you have found a "something" which really is extortionate, the wretch—ever irrepressible, and resigned, proceeds to placidly explain the why and wherefore with his usual smile of mild expostulation, and be it said pitying indignation.

It is vain to be indignant. Struggle against these accounts as you will, they "tot up serenely" *semper idem*. And on this point it is a well-known fact that you do not fall in your boy's estimation one little bit by these monthly ebullitions; he knows full well you can "stand it," for on entering your service he took immediate steps to ascertain your income, so that he could base his charges accordingly.

The boy is not ambitious. So long as he has little to do and plenty to get, and is refreshed by not less than four sleeps between meals and bedtime, and solaced with the occasional visits of a few select friends to a quiet rubber of his native whist, and the unlimited use of your choicest cigars and sweetest sherry, he is happy.

A few things, however, he does stipulate for—reasonable treatment, no kicks or cuffs, and above all, a quiet life, free from nagging. These conditions, with his pay and the prospect of unjust emoluments, he considers with a judicial mind. He weighs the pros. and cons., and, if the balance is in his favour, with you he stays and works on.

III.—KO-AI AND THE BELL.

MUCH as I dislike, the bigoted anti-foreign Manchoo-Tartar rulers of China, I have always liked and respected the polite and peace-loving hereditary Chinese, and especially admired their ladies—little imagining, however, in my wildest dreams, that one of them would eventually be the means of heroically saving my life, and would become my faithful wife.

Whenever I hear the solemn-sounding bell of the rustic church near my home, "mournfully dealing its dole" in the morning and evening, it reminds me of far-away China and of my dear old friend Chu Lee. A rare good fellow was Chu Lee, but, although a fairly sincere Christian, he could never forsake the inherent superstition of his race; and the most outrageously improbable stories he would tell with almost childish credulity.

We were walking together one evening in Shanghai, near the ancient walls of the Chinese city, and the bell of some convent had begun to ring, when he suddenly grasped me by the arm and, bringing me to a standstill, exclaimed "Listen! listen!—That sounds like poor Ko-ai's voice, calling for her shoe, poor girl!"

I looked about to try and discover the whereabouts of this damsel: but since I could neither hear nor see her, and as my friend's gaze seemed fixed on space, I concluded that he was labouring under some delusion or was temporarily bereft of reason.

"What do you mean?" I asked. "Who is this Ko-ai, this Celestial Cinderella of yours?"

He did not answer my question at once, but remained in an attitude of contemplative attention, repeating, the word *hsieh* (shoe)

at each stroke of the bell. When the tolling ceased, we moved on, and he suddenly awoke from this seeming trance.

"I suppose you have never heard, then, of poor Ko-ai, nor of the wonderful tragedy connected with the bell in the old Bell Tower at Pekin. I will tell you about it—it is a sad story—and the sounds we heard to-night reminded me of it—they were so similar to poor Ko-ai's voice, that I almost imagined it was her, and that I was back in Pekin again," he said, as we strolled on through the city, and he related the following legend:

Many hundreds of years ago, in the Ming dynasty, the Emperor Tung-lo, being desirous of leaving to posterity a substantial memento of his reign, built the famous Pekin Bell-Tower that yet stands intact—a mournful monument of tyranny.

Numerous high officials were entrusted with the work of building the tower and, when it was complete, he summoned his courtiers and expressed his satisfaction. The important work was now to make a bell, and for this purpose he called one of his most skilled metallists and entrusted the casting to him. The name of this favoured person was Kuan-Yu, a mandarin of some distinction in the capital, and one well liked by all who knew him. On receiving the order from the Emperor, he hastened home to impart the news to his beloved daughter Ko-ai, who was a beautiful girl of sixteen. It was a proud day for the good old man, and he invited his many friends to celebrate the occasion of his trust, and all heartily wished him success.

Next day he commenced operations with a will; and the scene of his labours was visited by crowds of folk, each one having his say and giving an opinion, and all evincing much interest in the making of the bell.

At last, after two months had passed happily and busily away, a proclamation was posted up about the city, notifying the public that, on the morrow, the casting of the great bell would take place in presence of the Emperor. Kuan-yu was happy in the sanguine belief of success, and in the contemplation of well-earned renown; and Ko-ai ardently shared in his hopefulness. Early in the day people began to gather near the new tower, and at the appointed time the gay-apparelled heralds announced through their

trumpets the coming of the Emperor, who in good time arrived with his retinue to grace the auspicious occasion.

Kuan-yu now stepped forward and, bowing low to the Emperor, gave a signal to his workmen, and the molten metal rushed into the cast. An ominous silence fell upon the hitherto noisy assemblage, and all craned forward anxiously to ascertain the result. It was to be indelibly written on the flushed and changing countenance of the disappointed man—the casting was "honeycombed."

With a warning frown and a stern caution, the Emperor and his retinue hastily left; and the crest-fallen mandarin returned home, soon, however, to find consolation in the fond and hopeful words of his loving daughter, who gave him fresh courage and determination to surmount the difficulty.

Two more months passed uneventfully away. Again the citizens gathered together in hundreds to witness the second casting. This attempt also failed; and as the impatient and enraged monarch rose for the second time to depart, he wrathfully declared aloud that, should the third casting likewise prove unsuccessful, he would surely decapitate the unfortunate Kuan-yu, who once more returned half broken-hearted to his quiet home. Again he found respite from the sorrow and disgrace that assailed him in the loving enthusiasm and hope of his fair child, who never failed to inspire him with fresh zeal and with determination to overcome the difficulty.

Poor Ko-ai, being a brave and devoted daughter, did not wish to further disturb her old father with any misgivings which she suffered on his account and which only strengthened her noble resolve.

> To make the days of age pass cheerfully,
> And close beneath the shadow of her love.

After much tearful deliberation and prayer, she determined, if possible, to divine the cause and prevent a recurrence of these most grievous failures. For this purpose, one day when her father was absent, she ordered her palanquin and set out to seek the advice of a celebrated astrologer. After traversing many narrow streets and lanes, she found herself before a small creeper-covered

hut situated on the outskirts of the city. On timidly entering, she beheld an old man, bent double with age, seated before a scanty fire that was kindled in the centre of the poorly furnished apartment.

At first he did not take heed of her. But at length he motioned her to a seat and, in a weak voice, inquired her pleasure. She at once related her father's misfortune, and, falling on her knees, implored the old man's advice and aid in this all-important matter.

For some minutes the astrologer maintained unbroken silence, during which time he appeared to be in a trance. As he awoke, his very bones seemed to creak as a tremor passed through his withered frame and he raised and straightened himself.

"My poor child," he then said, standing up beside her and placing a withered hand upon her shoulder, "it is, indeed, a terrible ordeal of self-sacrifice which his rescuer would bear. I will not hide the truth from you; but briefly I will make known the just but rigorous decrees of fate—inexorable fate! For I am a man of but few words. Your worthy father might go on trying to cast a bell for that tower until death relieved him of his task and stayed his hand, and the deft hands of generations of successors. But he and they would never succeed. For it is decreed by fate that, until the life-blood of a young and innocent maid is mixed with the molten metal, *the casting will never be perfect.* It is a noble cause. I can say no more, my child—may the gods be with you!"

Ko-ai returned home, sad and horrified, yet nobly determined to sacrifice her young life in order to save her beloved father and his honourable name.

Those last days were very dear to her, and she devoted them entirely to her father and the bell. The latter she now looked upon as part of her own life, since it was her own life that was required to make it perfect in every part. She felt glad however that it was in her power to do so good a deed, and to so fittingly show her devotion and her gratitude for long years of paternal care.

In due course the time for the third casting arrived. It was a bright and stilly day—a day long to be remembered by the people of that city. Early in the morning they began to gather in from

all parts of the surrounding country; and all eagerly discussed the chances of failure or success. For well they knew that failure meant the alternative of death to the well-liked metallist.

Poor Ko-ai was up early that morning, and, bringing out her little jewels and trinkets, dressed herself in her pretty silk-embroidered gown, and attended early prayer in the temple near her home. There she burned her small joss-sticks, and prayed simply and earnestly—for it was her last morning on earth. She had obtained her father's sanction to be present at the casting.

Once more the loud-braying trumpets herald the arrival of the Emperor and suite. Once more the anxious people crowd around to witness the event. Nearer and nearer to the fatal cast the devoted Ko-ai has her carriage moved.

Now her father steps forward.

His hand is raised.

A shriek rends the great stillness—the liquid metal hisses—the multitude waver—and there is a great murmur. Headlong into the seething metal, poor Ko-ai has disappeared.

One of her attendants rushes forward to try and save her from plunging to her doom, but only saves a little silken shoe, which comes off in her hand.

No more was seen of Ko-ai. But when the great bell was uncovered, it was perfect in every respect. But the broken-hearted father never lived to hear its sonorous sound, like the cry of a human voice—a voice—repeating the word *hsieh* (shoe.) In the sounding of that bell is to be heard—even to this day—poor Ko-ai calling for her shoe!

GRINDING RICE.

IV.—"CELESTIAL" LADIES.

WHILE not professing to know very much about the domestic life of the very wealthy Chinese, I have learned quite sufficient to know that there has of late years been much written upon this subject which is unfounded and misleading. Of course with the rich and affluent in the Empire, polygamy is the order of their life.

The first wife of a Chinese gentleman of means is rarely seen by strangers, and leads a very secluded life, passing her time in working embroidery, which she generally excels in; reading, and, if highly educated, writing finished verses, and on certain days visiting the neighbouring temple to propitiate the gods.

The minor wives, however, often lead anything but an opulent life—sometimes a miserable one; it much depends on the first wife, upon whom they are supposed to wait, and whose word, to them, is law. If she is a kind-hearted and humble-minded woman, all goes well, and they are a happy, sisterly family. But even then, as with us, petty jealousies and disagreements are very apt for a time to ruffle the calmness of the best regulated and most united families, causing periods of unhappiness and discontent.

Although, according to Chinese law, a husband has almost absolute control over his wife, and is even vested, under specific circumstances, with power of life and death over her; and although he may have his wife punished with a hundred blows for merely striking him, there is remarkably little wife-beating among them as a rule, the men being a very inoffensive, well-behaved set who, on the other hand, often put up with a great deal of sound

scolding delivered with as harsh a tongue as could well be found in any part of the world.

Judging from what I have seen and heard during a residence of seven years in China, I consider that, generally speaking, the women are decidedly faithful and thrifty, and, being excellent wives, are happy and are well treated by their husbands who are abstemious, hardworking men who know how to appreciate the manifold blessings of a good home.

Of course there are exceptions to the rule; but I must remark in their favour, that they rarely—*very rarely*—get intoxicated, or any the worse for liquor. Whereas half the misery among the middle and lower classes in England is caused by drunken wives or husbands, generally the latter, who on receipt of their weekly salaries, remain out carousing half the night, and then return home, penniless and brutalized with drink, to punish their hard-working, anxious wives.

Among my numerous friends and acquaintances in Shanghai was a Mr. E——, who resided in Hongkew, and whose wife was a Chinese lady of good family, by whom he had several very pretty children.

One afternoon, during a visit there, Mrs. E—— introduced me to a charming young Soochow lady, named Wang Sêou Jâe, a distant relative of hers, and an orphan, whose mother had recently died, leaving her a considerable sum of money—about $ 15,000 —in trust of an aunt who was supposed to act as her guardian until she should marry or arrive at a certain age.

Sêou Jâe was not only young, but a beauty of the most rare type, peculiar to the women of Soochow, who are famed throughout the Far East for their comeliness, and was a tropical flower that one could very imperfectly imagine, and then only associate with unrealistic dreams of sea-divided shores. Her complexion was very fair, her nose straight and delicate, and her mouth small and firm, yet betraying a tenderness which was most discernible in her large expressive eyes. Having received a good education, she spoke English fluently, and—like many of her own country-people, was studious almost beyond her age, and very intelligent.

After our introduction I frequently had the pleasure of meeting

A SOOCHOW LADY.

her at Mr. E——'s house; and she always made good company with her bright and fascinating ways, and amused me immensely with her quaint booklore and legends. She told them in such a convincing and descriptive manner that my mind became almost peopled with familiar spirits.

It is needless to say that, in spite of her nationality, I became very attached to her; and it was evident to me that my esteem was reciprocated. She was too pure-minded and straightforward to try and conceal her regard, which was manifested in her own modest manner. After a time she would never sit beside me, but always, according to the custom of her country, a little behind my chair, deferentially, and ready to serve me. So that I was obliged to turn half round to converse with her, and it made me feel most impolite.

In the quiet summer evenings, we used to wander hand in hand about through the gardens—her female attendant or, *amah*, following at a respectful distance behind, or seated ourselves near the river, and listened to the ecstatic music of Chevalier Vela's band which played during the long tropical evenings when "all the world and his wife" were out enjoying the freshness of the gentle breezes that came stealing up from the distant sea. *

I shall never forget those summer rambles in the evening with poor little Sêou Jâe. I used not to trouble myself much about the future then, but was quite happy and contented to let my

* I do not wish the reader for one moment to imagine that it is customary in China for ladies, young or old, married or single, to walk with gentlemen, even with their husbands, brothers or other relatives. The Chinese—especially those of the upper classes,—usually keep their women-folk in strict seclusion. Miss Wang Sêou Jâe must therefore be looked upon rather as an exception to the general rule. She had been educated at an English school, mixing from her childhood with Europeans. Being left an orphan at an early age she adopted the more civilized customs of her companions as well as their religion. Of course Western civilization is slowly working beneficial changes in the domestic life of the Chinese; and in many Christian households the women enjoy—if not as much freedom as those of western nations—quite as much respect. The revolting habit of binding the feet of female children in order to make them unnaturally small—resulting in their total disfigurement and causing the leg to wither away to a more stump—is gradually being discontinued by a few of the most enlightened people. AUTHOR.

thoughts go wandering with hers in the wonders and the glories of the past—the mysterious past, which held such charms for her strangely-tutored mind.

How well I remember her, and her pretty ways! Those large, long-lashed eyes of hers—how they would flash and brighten, lighting up with animation as she credulously related some time-honoured tradition or historic fable in which some wily old fox always seemed to turn up very unexpectedly and in the most improbable places, and make great havoc before transforming itself into a mortal or a fairy or some mischievous elf.

She seemed to implicitly believe all these funny old stories. They all belonged to the past—hundreds and thousands of years ago; and her forefathers knew about them, and the world was very different then, and the people were very good and duteous in those days. Thus she moralized, and she became quite inspired while impressively telling all these old-time fables, treasured in her deep-musing mind.

To me the quietude of Oriental life seemed like a short dream of blissful happiness and studious repose in an enchanted land, far removed from the care and tumult of the busy Western world.

Regarding the Chinese, I have never allowed caste, family, prejudice, or advice to interfere with my feelings. I have always and shall ever continue to love them; not nationally but individually; and am honoured to say that I hold their respect and confidence, and count among them some of my dearest and most reliable friends who would follow me anywhere and stand by me to the last, as I have more than once proved. But to know and appreciate these people they require to be carefully studied, as they keenly study you before giving or even accepting friendship.

One afternoon, at Sêou Jâe's request, I paid a visit with her to her aunt, or guardian, who lived near the east gate of the Chinese city.

On entering the ill-kept house of her relative, the old woman, much to the annoyance and dismay of Sêou Jâe, gave us a very cool reception. I at once entertained grave doubts as to the honesty of this aunt, whom I did not at all like the look of.

CANTONESE WOMEN.

Seeing that our company was not desirable, we beat a somewhat hasty retreat.

Not wishing to further trouble or unnecessarily alarm poor Sêou Jâe, who seemed very downcast and worried, I did not impart to her the forebodings which began to crowd into my mind.

Strange to say, when we met again that evening, Sêou Jâe, who lived in a very nice house, with her two female attendants, in the Nankin Road, seemed very dispirited, and like myself, foreshadowed calamity. But I thought it was merely her nervous fancy when she said that two or three repulsive-looking old hags had been watching the house. She seemed quite frightened at first, but after a time I allayed her fears and forgot all about it.

We both tried to cheer one another, but it was a most dismal failure. And when we said good night, neither of us could speak, for anguish has no expression, only most eloquent silence.

Thus we parted, very likely for ever, for years have passed since then. Even such is life!

> But in our dreams we meet again once more
> And wander there, upon the lonely shore.

During all my subsequent wanderings, I have only met one lady who resembles in manner and appearance, and who strikingly reminds me of poor Sêou Jâe, having also her pretty old-fashioned, childish ways and ideas; and she is my devoted little wife, whom I met on the cold northern shores of that vast Empire, but who is a native of the sunny south of China. Of her I shall speak later on.

Next evening I waited for Sêou Jâe at the appointed place, but she did not come; and thus for three days I waited in doubt and anxiety. On the morning of the third day, however, I drove over to her house and was met at the door by the two female attendants, who seemed as troubled as I was. From them I learned that she had two days previously received a letter, and had shortly afterwards left the house, saying she was going to see her aunt, but would be back by six o'clock that evening. Since then they had not seen her.

Having listened to this startling news I asked permission to see her private rooms on the floor above, and went up with them:

first into the sitting-room, which looked neat and tidy, and then into her sleeping apartment. Her morning gown was hanging on the back of a chair, beneath which her little embroidered slippers lay. A vase of fresh-gathered roses stood on a table near the window, and her gold bangles and miniature watch lay on the dressing table beside a tiny lace-edged handkerchief which still retained its perfume. Several other knick-knacks were scattered about in profusion just as she had hurriedly left them.

I took a few of the fragrant little white *so-hin* blossoms which she used to wear in her hair, and wrapping them carefully up in the small handkerchief, kept them in remembrance of her and of my first summer in the Far East.

I drove off at once to the aunt's house. On knocking at the door, she and two rough-looking men opened it and, in answer to my enquiries, said that Sêou Jâe had been there, but had left almost immediately, and they were ignorant of her whereabouts. But I felt a great deal too worried and suspicious to pay much heed or place much credence in what they said, and summarily dealing with the men who barred the way, I entered the house. After hastily looking through the three lower rooms, I went upstairs.

Hearing the clink of money and the noisy shuffling of dominoes issuing from the first room on the landing, I opened the door and entered.

Seated at a round marble-topped table were four repulsive looking old hags and three equally villainous looking men, eagerly gambling.

Clawing the stakes up as I entered, they confronted me, two of the men vainly endeavouring to slip behind me, evidently with no very good intention. But I was equal to the occasion, and producing a letter from my pocket, gave them to understand that it was a warrant to search the house, and that by using a whistle my men, who were waiting for me outside, would enter and arrest them for gambling. Whereupon the men slunk away up a ladder which led through a trapdoor to the roof, and the old women followed me from room to room muttering to one another.

But Sêou Jâe was not to be found, although I now felt certain that she was the victim of some foul plot, and was in the hands

of these wretches, one of whom claimed relationship. I was determined however, to find her if she were to be found, whatever the cost might be.

Having satisfied myself that she was not in the house, I drove off to the Central French Police Station and, sending in my card, obtained an interview with the Chief Inspector who, after taking my deposition, apologetically informed me that under the circumstances he was quite unable to assist me in any way, as the missing lady was a Chinese subject and not my wife. He surmised, however, that she had been kidnapped for the sake of her money, and in order to prevent her from marrying me. Apologizing for having troubled him, I was about to leave when a thought seemed to strike him.

"I regret our inability to help you," he said, "but here is the address of a very clever Chinese detective who has retired from the force. I have no doubt he would be pleased to take up a case like this if well paid for his trouble."

Thanking the officer, I immediately went in search of the man who might prove of inestimable value to me in unravelling this mystery.

V.—WITH A DETECTIVE.

AFTER picking my way through a labyrinth of narrow back streets and alleyways, near the walls of the Chinese city, I found the unpretentious residence of the ex-detective.

Fortunately he was at home, and I was shown upstairs to his private parlour, which was filled from floor to ceiling with interesting and suggestive trophies of the chase in the shape of ancient and modern firearms, from a gingall to a Martini-Henry and a matchlock horse-pistol to a Colt'revolver, neatly hung amongst a miscellaneous collection of cross-bars, skeleton keys and *queues* of beheaded criminals. Each article was carefully ticketed and encased. Gags, short swords, and life-preservers were there in great variety with an assortment of other Chinese instruments too numerous to mention, and the photographs of their owners, methodically classed and numbered for reference.

Ah Shun, for such was this worthy man's name, was strong and powerfully built, and of medium height, possessing a pleasing countenance, in which good humour, intelligence, and a fair amount of pluck and determination were discernible. His dress was of the simplest, and his manner was easy, and decidedly jocular—in fact, he always seemed to smile when he ought to have looked serious.

Before going into the case he stated his terms—three dollars a day, and all expenses paid. I agreed to this, as it was not unreasonable, and judiciously bestowing a few compliments as to his reputation, and backing them up with a ten-dollar note, I enlisted him in my service.

I now stated my case, placing him in possession of the minutest

details bearing upon it. He smilingly listened to all I said, occasionally giving a grunt or some other manifestation of his interest or capacity for grasping the situation. He was chary, though, about giving an opinion on the matter until he had made inquiries; but he considered it quite possible that she had been kidnapped. He felt perfectly sure, however, that she would not be kept at the aunt's house, although it seemed more than probable that this relative was implicated in her abduction. He considered it a very interesting case, and well worthy of his attention, especially as several wealthy ladies had disappeared within the past two years under somewhat similar circumstances, only one of whom had been found.

He then accompanied me to a small shop close by, where I could obtain a disguise for myself. Acting under his advice, I ordered two complete suits of Chinese clothes to be made—one of very common material, as worn by the lower classes, and the other of silk, to wear when impersonating a native gentleman, and shoes to match.

Before parting, he told me to hold myself in readiness to be called at any moment of the night or day; and to be prepared to risk or defend my life or hers if circumstances demanded it; as it was a very dangerous case—such a large sum of money hanging in the balance, and perhaps very dangerous criminals being employed by her abductors. So I took the precaution of buying an extra revolver. I could hardly bear to imagine poor Sêou Jâe in the hands of such people, and work or rest were alike quite out of the question.

I went home, and nothing worthy of mention happened until the fifth night after this at 11.30 p.m. I was then retiring to rest, when the quietude of the house was suddenly disturbed by a succession of slight but rapid knocks on the back-door, or servants' entrance. Soon afterwards the boy announced the arrival of "my friend, Mr. Tom, from Canton," who wished to see me immediately.

Who my nocturnal visitor could be puzzled me considerably.

Mr. Tom, *alias* Ah Shun, the detective, had, unknown to the servant, crept upstairs after him, and now, without further cere-

mony, entered my room, a broad smile illuming his rubicund face as he closed the door on the surprised and indignant boy.

"Fidè, fidè! (make haste, make haste!) he said, forgetting for a moment and addressing me in Chinese as he urged me to assume the disguise of a coolie, arm myself with two loaded revolvers, and prepare to follow him at once, as he had struck the trail, and hoped to rescue Sêou Jâe that night and run her captors to earth. He had brought my Chinese clothes with him.

Grasping his hand I thanked him warmly for having exerted himself so much in the matter.

There was no time to waste, so I put on the dowdy-looking garments, and he dexterously disfigured my face with a piece of burnt cork and a skin-coloured paste of his own, changing the curvature of my eyebrows in such a remarkable manner that, with the addition of a few effective lines and smudges, the cast of my features became Chinese, and I looked every inch a low-born denizen of no particular occupation, or fixed abode: and Ah Shun looked equally questionable.

A dilapidated round hat, with scraggy queue fastened inside, completed my singular disguise; and my own dear mother would not have recognized me.

"You must not hold me responsible for any misfortune that may occur to you to-night," he said, regarding me for a moment seriously and stedfastly as he added, "much depends upon your prudence. Are you ready to obey me without faltering, to ask no questions, and perhaps risk your life?"

Having satisfied him on these points, he advised me to let him go out by the back door, while I left by the front one. Whoever gained the north-west entrance to the gardens first was to wait for the other. Leaving the house, I strolled leisurely along, adopting the peculiar swaggering gait of the Chinese, so as not to attract notice, and joined Ah Shun at the appointed rendezvous, he having arrived first.

We now passed through the deserted gardens, which looked enchanting in the moonlight. Our reasons for passing that way were to find out if we were followed and to throw any spy off guard. Seating ourselves in the most isolated part of the grounds.

OPIUMSMOKING.

we quietly watched and waited for some minutes, in the meanwhile arranging our plan of action. Being satisfied, after a time, that we were not observed, we passed out through the south gate, and made our way along the tree-shaded bank of the river beside the bund, until coming to the Yang-king Pang Creek bridge, which we crossed, turning sharp off to the right and proceeding some distance before taking the fourth turning on the left, which brought us into a very disreputable neighbourhood, the Seven Dials of Shanghai.

Shortly afterwards we entered a second-class opium den. On either side of the dimly lighted rooms were rough wooden settles, each being occupied by one or two smokers who reclined on their sides, the head resting upon a small wooden or earthenware bolster, and both hands being continually employed on the flute-like bamboo pipe, one hand grasping it, and the other holding a long steel bodkin which from time to time is inserted in a small horn box containing prepared opium, a thick and sticky deep brown liquid like molasses. When sufficient opium is wound upon the end of the bodkin, he holds it over a little lamp by his side, turning it continually, and at intervals kneading it against the flat covered-bowl of the pipe until sufficiently heated, when he places the opium, about the size of a pea, upon the minute aperture which enters the hollow bowl, taking care to puncture a small air-hole through the opium into the pipe. He then places it to his lips and inhales the smoke, drawing fast and furiously for a few seconds, and then recommencing to fill it again, during which process he leisurely emits the smoke through mouth and nostrils, and so on until satisfied.

Many people wrongly suppose that, after smoking opium, a man becomes half or completely stupefied. Quite the reverse; the opium seems to have a stimulating influence; and when a man feels tired, he smokes a few pipes of opium, and rises refreshed and invigorated. If, however, he has finished his day's work, he invariably indulges in a few extra pipes, perhaps with a friend, and, after a pleasant chat, bids him good night, and, retiring to his couch, gradually falls into a comfortable sleep. Of course if he smokes too much, which is more the exception than the rule, it makes

him somewhat drowsy and he sleeps heavier. But the ethereal, De-Quincey-like visions which are supposed to enhance his slumbers are only familiar to western romancers.

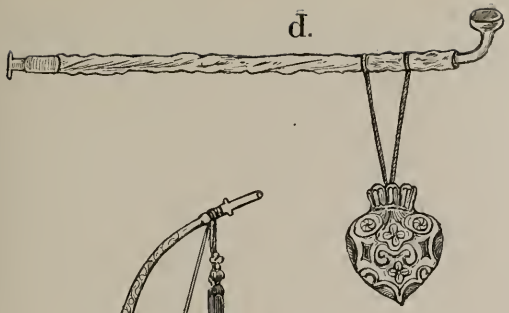
As Ah Shun had arranged to meet in this place a somewhat notorious malefactor whom he had employed in this case, as is the custom with detectives, who firmly believe in the proverb "set a thief to catch a thief," we both stretched ourselves upon one of the cleanest and most secluded lounges, and awaited his coming, during which time I observed my surroundings with considerable curiosity, taking care, however, not to excite suspicion.

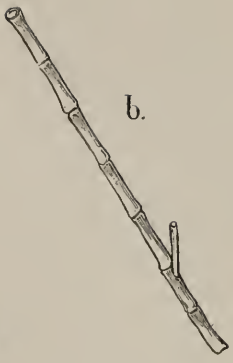
When a poor coolie wants a smoke he goes into one of these divans, lays down two or three cents (thirty cash), perhaps more if he can afford it, and receives a proportionate amount of prepared opium, generally held in a small shell, and a pipe, both of which he returns to the proprietor before leaving.

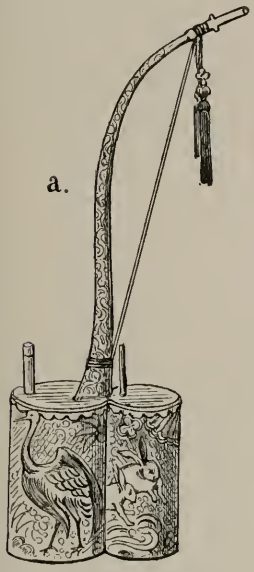
The price of opium varies greatly, according to quality, from 8 to 18 dollars a pound. The native opium grown in China, is generally considered the most inferior, and the Indian opium, especially Malwa and Patna, the best.

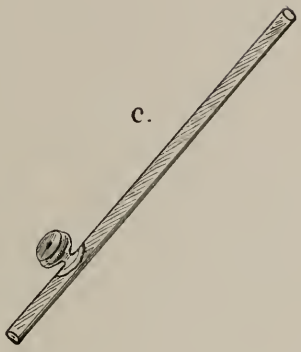
The Chinese are fastidious smokers, and refined in their ideas of smoking, if somewhat slovenly in this respect, as I will soon show the reader.

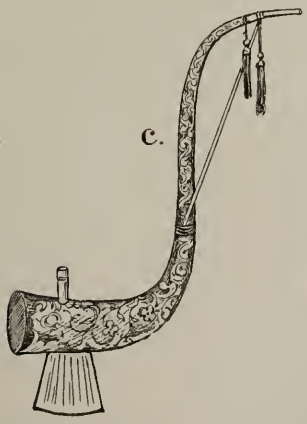
Their best tobacco pipe is the hubble-bubble, made of a white filigreed metal resembling silver, with a little movable tube or bowl, like a cigarette holder, which is only large enough to contain a pinch of tobacco. The body of the pipe is fitted with all necessary requisites in the shape of manipulating prickers, small cleaning brush, spills, and tobacco box; the lower part being filled with water by which the smoke is cooled and purified in its passage, before being inhaled through the long outward-curving stem that is always adorned with knotted silken cords and beaded tassels. The tubular bowl, being so small, only holds sufficient tobacco for two or at the most three whiffs, at the expiration of which it is drawn out and cleaned by blowing through the lower end; and the half-smoked contents, falling on the ground, generally burn a little black cavity there. You may always know when











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Chinese have tenanted a house by the floors being covered with these little black dents—typical endorsements of their refinement—incomparable with the "barbarity" of Western nations.

The poorer classes who cannot afford to buy metal hubble-bubble pipes make bamboo ones, or merely use the ordinary long, short, crooked, or straight stemmed pipes, perhaps ornamented with an embroidered tobacco-bag dangling from the stem, and fitted with glass mouth-piece. These pipes, like all the rest, have tiny brass bowls, which hold barely a pinch of tobacco, and require constant filling with tobacco which smokes like chaff, emits a peculiarly unpleasant aroma, has an uncommonly nauseating flavour, and possesses the undeniable virtues of being fine, light, and above all, cheap, and entirely different in every respect from ours.

Shortly after midnight a villainous looking, ill-clad coolie entered the house, and on discovering our whereabouts, made signs to Ah Shun to accompany him into an inner apartment where the opium fumes were almost enough to suffocate one. Here they conversed in an undertone for fully half an hour before enlightening me as to the subject of their conversation. Then Ah Shun told me that the young girl had that very night been drugged and removed from a house of bad repute to a worse one, inhabited by a powerful gang of pirates and kidnappers, and was well watched. The entrances to the house were, as usual, closed and barricaded, and the lower rooms full of the worst characters in the city, who night after night made it their head-quarters for plotting and gambling transactions.

It was therefore quite impossible to gain admittance by the ordinary means, but we might do so from the roof, where there was a trap-door which gave entrance to a cock-loft that was used as a sleeping apartment; but the ladder there was always removed at night. Our intended guide, however, having frequented that resort, knew where a rope was concealed on the roof for any emergency.

It was a very dangerous undertaking, but it was our only chance of effecting a rescue. If the girl proved to be Sêou Jâe, we would watch our opportunity and get her out through the roof, one of

us standing by with loaded revolvers to cover the retreat in case an alarm was raised.

Having settled our *modus operandi,* we left the divan, allowing our conductor to precede us, and following him at a respectful distance, all three walking in an easy, aimless manner, to avoid attracting notice. Suddenly the coolie stopped before a small stall, behind which a venerable man sat studying and retailing the wonders of necromancy. We also paused there, and before proceeding further, Ah Shun insisted up on having our fortunes told. The old man now placed three ancient cash * into the hollow shell of a tortoise, † and shaking it for a few seconds, while muttering incantations, emptied them out on the table, the result being indicated by the facial position of the three coins. In our case the wizard prognosticated very favourably to Ah Shun and the coolie, and indifferently to me. Had the fates been unpropitious to them, I very much doubt whether either of them would have proceeded any further that night, so great is the superstition of these people. As it was, we resumed our tortuous course which

* Supposed to possess talismanic influence. Sometimes tied on the wrists of new-born children. Newly-married people place cash belonging to the reigns of various Emperors under their beds for luck and prosperity.

† The use of the tortoise-shell is evidently of Thibetian origin. An ancient Thibetian inscription describes the origin of the world thus:—"In the beginning, what existed from eternity, in nothingness, was called the tortoise. The Buddhas of the past, present, and future sprang out of him. The three worlds and all the animal beings also originated from the eternal tortoise. The heavens are the arched back of the tortoise, and the earth is the breast. From the union of these two sprang three sons—mountain, ir n, water; and three daughters—wind, fire, tree." These eight great elements of the world are believed by the Thibetians to be the most potent factors of human destiny; and the Thibetian system of divination is founded on them and on elements subordinate to them. In the figures described on the breast of the tortoise, after the pattern of the natural scales, there are eighty-nine "mansions" devoted to the principal factors of luck and to various spiritual beings, animals articles, and symbols of auspicious or inauspicious significance. "A man starting on a journey avoids the direction of the inauspicious mansions. But if he have to propitiate an evil spirit, he should throw the offerings intended for it in the inauspicious directions. On the contrary, if he have to worship a friendly spirit, he should place his offerings towards a mansion which contains one of the auspicious objects."

lay through an intricate maze of alleyways and gloomy passages, infested with low characters and mangy dogs.

Presently our guide, who had latterly been keeping quite close ahead of us, again stopped, and, listening intently for a while, bended down and crawled through a round hole in the wall. We followed, pausing on the other side in profound darkness. Next came the sound of a latch being quietly lifted, then of a door being opened, and finally a whispered *lai la* (come) revealed the whereabouts of our conductor, who, as we groped our way to his side, struck a match, lighting a small lantern he had with him. We found ourselves in an empty house, at the foot of a steep and narrow flight of stairs. Removing and carrying our shoes, and ascending cautiously—not that there was much fear of interruption, as the place was quite deserted,—we soon gained the top of the house, and then, climbling up a notched board, pushed a trap-door open, and crawled out on the roof.

The coolie now told us to remain where we were, and to be sure not to rise or make the slightest noise until he had reconnoitred the position. He then crept forward on hands and knees, leaving us amongst a forest of smoke-begrimed chimneys, anxiously awaiting the issue. It was a clear starlight night, but fortunately the moon had not yet risen.

We were not kept long in suspense, for he soon reappeared, scrambling along silent and cat-like, being no doubt an adept at his profession. He informed us that, as far as he could ascertain, the inmates of the cock-loft were asleep, and the rope was placed in readiness. There were four old women and two men there, the latter being armed, he thought.

The prospect was by no means an inviting one, but it was no use faltering, and time was precious, there being none to lose, as the sleepers might awake at any moment, or the gamblers disperse to their respective beds, or a dozen things happen to frustrate our designs. So forward we crept, one after the other, now and again holding our breath as one of us would unwittingly displace a loose tile. But the imperturbable Ah Shun seemed to derive considerable amusement from these dreaded mishaps, for a broad smile continually flitted about his pleasant countenance, and at

intervals his portly sides shook with suppressed laughter. No doubt we must have looked ridiculous: but I heartily wished a termination of the fun.

We soon came to the open trap-door whence proceeded the fumes of opium and the snoring of sleepers. The rope was in readiness, and the coolie, motioning me to follow, slid quietly down it. Leaving Ah Shun to keep watch above, I also descended into the darkness, being at first almost overpowered by the foul air.

We could not see at all, and dare not show a light: but the coolie seemed to know by instinct where to tread. Placing my hands lightly on his shoulders, and pressing my toes against his heels, he led me forward to a rickety ladder, down which we crept out of the creaky loft, entering a narrow, dimly lighted passage, whose walls were hung with weapons of every description, ready for use at any moment. Sliding a panel back, the coolie now led the way into a little dark closet about which he fumbled until he found another movable panel that gave entrance to a small secret passage or tunnel—a regular rat hole—through which we crawled on hands and knees, until, coming to a small hatch which, on being raised, revealed, with the aid of a lighted match, a narrow staircase leading down between the walls, one of which was constructed of wood.

At the foot of these stairs my conductor stopped, and, peeping through a small round eye-hole—about the size of a three-penny-piece, for some minutes, softly drew back a concealed bolt and, giving a pass-word, opened a narrow door composed of a single panel which fitted so exactly that its use was not perceptible. *

We now entered a lighted apartment, and there before us lay a beautiful young Soochow lady, reclining upon a rough couch, in a state of insensibility, her silken clothes torn and stained: evidently done in her struggles for freedom when being carried off.

But, sorry as I felt for the poor creature before me, I was mad

* I have since been over several gambling houses—especially in Hong Kong—fitted with these traps, panels, secret passages and "cock-lofts," which are constructed by the tenants in case of police raids.

with disappointment: for it was not Sêou Jâe after all, only someone very much like her.

Two old hags were seated near this unfortunate captive, and were smoking and gambling at a small round table. Soon after we entered, however, and before we were aware of it, one of them, who had regarded me with evident suspicion, suddenly darted out of the room to give the alarm. The coolie was the first to notice it, and—as a shrill voice rang out through the house,—he half dragged me back to the panel.

"Hor sau! hor sau *!" (Be quick! be quick!) he said excitedly, closing the panel behind us, darting up the stairs and wriggling through the passage, closely followed by myself. For it meant death if we were caught.

As we gained the cock-loft we heard the clatter of feet and the cries of our pursuers, as they hurried up from the bottom of the house to intercept our flight.

But the coolie was equal to the occasion, and stepping quickly over the sleeping forms, he placed the ladder in position and mounted to the roof. In my haste to follow, I trod on somebody's hand—evidently that of a woman, for she cried out, awaking the rest.

On gaining the roof, Ah Shun, who stood ready with his revolvers, thoughtfully pulled up the rope and ladder after us, so as to gain time by cutting off their exit.

We could not return by the way we had come as it led directly past the den we were leaving, so we scrambled away after the coolie along the roofs in an opposite direction. Having thus traversed some distance, we turned off between some chimneys and had to jump down across an abyss about six feet wide on to the gutters of another less lofty building, and so on, gradually decending from roof to roof, following our ingenious guide, who finally brought us in this manner to within a few feet of the ground, to which we descended by means of a thick drain pipe, down which we slid, thus evading our pursuers and entering a far more safe and respectable neighbourhood, considerably removed

* Shanghai dialect. In Cantonese it would be "Fidè! fidè."

from the scene of our luckless adventure, which had nearly ended disastrously.

I am glad to relate however, that two nights after this, the young lady, who proved to be the second wife of a small mandarin, living some miles away in the country, was pluckily rescued by Ah Shun and two of his accomplices, whilst she was again being removed from the house of her abductors, and was restored to her husband, who liberally rewarded her intrepid deliverers.

BARGAINING.

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VI.—THE CITY OF SOOCHOW.

I VERY naturally despaired of seeing poor Sêou Jâe again and at last abandoned the hopeless quest. Even Ah Shun, though a consummate master of his profession, was obliged to acknowledge himself baffled by the insidious cunning of her abductors.

Three weeks had thus passed without any tidings, when one evening, while I was reading near the open window of my sitting-room, a small piece of bamboo was thrown in with accurate aim from the road beneath, alighting on a small table beside me. I looked out, but could see no one, and on examining the missile, found it was hollow. In this tube a Chinese letter had been secreted.

It was very brief and hurriedly written on a rough piece of paper, and was from Sêou Jâe:

"*Save me—my heart is sick. They are carrying me away to Soochow in a boat—we are nearly there. They not are unkind, but if you receive this, try and rescue me.*"

I would try. There was no time to be lost. Writing off a couple of business letters, I ordered my brougham, and drove off to Ah Shun's house, but he was out.

Back I went, and told my boy, Ah Way, who was an intelligent young fellow, to prepare to accompany me to Soochow at once, and sent him out to purchase necessary provisions and hire a proper light-draft native house-boat for the journey.

I bundled a few things into a portmanteau, and, within an hour after receiving the letter, went aboard the boat, for which

I arranged to pay three dollars a day and one dollar for the crew's "chow" money.

It would not interest the reader were I to give a detailed account of our passage to Soochow; let it be sufficient for me to relate that we followed the course of the Soochow Creek from its mouth, and—owing to the low tide and want of wind, did not arrive at the village of Wang-deu—a distance of nineteen miles—until eleven o'clock next morning. Making fair progress throughout that day, sometimes sailing, but more often poling, we passed the departmental city of Taitsang the same evening.

Owing to the somewhat anti-foreign feeling that seemed to exist there—manifesting itself in sundry brickbats and other missiles which came hurtling about the boat in a very suggestive manner—we thought it prudent not to stop, so proceeded on our course with every despatch, being favoured throughout the night with a fair breeze which died away towards morning. It was not until very late in the afternoon that we arrived at Kwinsan, * about fifty-four miles from Shanghai.

The remaining twenty-one miles—which seemed very long ones—were through a broad and straight canal. On the night of the third day we sighted the moated walls, over thirty feet in height, of this far-famed and magnificent city, the capital of Kiangsu, and the silk metropolis of the Orient, founded during the lifetime of Confucius—five hundred years before the coming of Christ, and about the same time as the second temple of Jerusalem was completed, in the time of Ezra.

It is built on the banks of the Grand Canal, the aquatic highway of the Middle Kingdom, and is nearly eighty miles to the westward of Shanghai, between the Bay of Hangchow and the mighty Yangtsze or "Son of the Sea," that receives the waters of the canal some forty miles northward of the city, which boasts of six gates—the Tse-mun on the north, the Pen-mun on the south, the Sou-mun and Fu-mun on the east, and the Chang-mun and Seu-mun on the west, the latter gate facing a range of lofty

* For sometime the headquarters of Major—afterwards General Gordon—during his advance on Soochow, when the city was held by the Taiping insurgents.

A ROMANTIC GARDEN.

mountains. Beyond these lies the Tai Hu, or Great Lake, commonly known as the Inland Sea, that is five miles in breadth and thirty in length, and in the centre of which are numbers of picturesque hilly islands, covered with the choicest flowers and most beautiful groves of trees—orange, lemon, peach, plum, pomegranate, *pepo* and *yangmei*. On these "Enchanted Isles," as they are called, the finest silk is cultivated.

Throughout the eighteen provinces Soochow is reverently spoken of as an earthly Paradise—"above is Heaven, and below Soochow," the Chinese say; and the dearest wish of a Chinaman's heart is to pass his days of retirement in "Beautiful Soo," where, through three-quarters of the year, flowers bloom incessantly, where the most bewitching of Celestial ladies, with their elegant "golden lilies," * live in queenly affluence; and where gilded pleasure boats—with satin lounges and velvet cushions—glide to and fro on romantic excursions to the Elysian isles of the peaceful Inland Sea.

Among the finest edifices within the walls of this city are four pagodas, three fallen into ruin, and one—the rarest and most magnificent piece of architecture of its kind in the land—the Low-mun Ta—with its nine stories and lofty outer galleries and pinnacle-topped roof which rises majestically two hundred feet and more above the palaces below. The topmost gallery—reached by a broad spiral staircase through its stem—looks away over a vast expanse of strikingly beautiful country, over the far-famed Huku-shan hill, and its once celebrated gardens, the olden haunts of the ancient sons of Han.

Two thousand years ago the traveller in this great archaic city—then the capital of the Kingdom of Wu—traversed the same cobble-stone pavements of to-day, and paused to admire, with reverent awe, the palatial halls and palaces, even then covered with the moss and ivy of centuries, which still live to grace this honoured statue of antiquity.

Soochow is encased by two walls, an outer and inner, the inner one being thirty-five feet high, and mounted at intervals with high

* A poetical name for the small cramped feet of Chinese women. I believe one learned author erroneously calls them "water-lilies."

watch-towers and bastions for cannon, the broad parapet being used as a promenade, whence, during the silent nights, the occasional drowsy tapping of a bamboo, or the beating of a drum, is heard as the sentinels signal that all is well, and from which a splendid view of the surrounding country can be obtained.

The tree-shaded walks and roads are well laid out and broad, though much hampered by stalls and shopmen's counters, and in the morning by fish tubs, vegetable baskets, and other market produce. The heavily roofed houses, generally black painted, are high and picturesque, conspicuous for their pillars, offices, tiled courtyards, and lodges; and the shops for their breadth of open frontage, and long perpendicular signboards, most of them gilded and fantastically embellished, which greatly add to the picturesque appearance of the thoroughfares, which are crowded from morn to eve by pedestrians,—women, officials, students, merchants, chair-bearers, and coolies,—all hurrying along, except the wealthier ones, who have their own easy swaggering gait.

But should any one in this busy crowd see on the ground a piece of paper inscribed with writing or printing, so great is their respect for this matter, that, however dirty or torn it may be, he will pick it up and deposit it in the first box he comes to. All streets in China are supplied with these receptacles for paper, which are cleared out at stated periods and the contents burned, the ashes being carefully collected and sealed up in earthen vessels which are then reverently consigned to the depths of a river or a deep grave in the ground. For the Chinese firmly believe that honour, distinction, wealth, and old age may all be attained by thus showing proper respect for written paper.

Broad, stone-faced canals intersect this busy metropolis at all points, and are frequently spanned by magnificent stone arches of great age and stability, beneath which all manner of junks and *sampans* in pleasing variety pass to and fro with cargoes and wealthy wanderers—princes, merchants, and mandarins—to all parts of the empire. For all men come here to this sacred city, this Venetian Paris of the Middle Kingdom, the birthplace of her greatest statesmen, poets, and historians; where proud scholars crowd the examination halls, authors fill the libraries, and poets

sing of the landmarks so celebrated in history, whose fame they perpetuate.

I was greatly impressed with all I saw, and my visit to that famous old city will be indelibly treasured in my memory with fond though sad recollections. For, although I could not find her, I felt when leaving that I left behind me, caged within those sombre time-worn battlements, one of the best and fairest friends of my roving life in the Far East.

> "Out of my reach, behind eternity,
> Hid in the sacred treasure of the past."

But we must travel onward, leaving Sêou Jâe amid the romantic memories of bygone celebrities, princes and poets, people and places immortalized in the most refined verse, and associated with the glory of past generations, so dear to her old-world mind and their age-honoured traditions.

Bidding farewell to this archaic city, I have taken the liberty of introducing in the next chapter one of these quaint traditions, in which I have endeavoured to faithfully depict some of the most striking peculiarities of Chinese life, especially the strictly deferential and evasively-catechetical manner of address affected by the educated classes, particularly by the students and *literati* of this mysterious Empire.

VII.—THE SEAL OF FATE. *

I.

A SUMMER'S evening, and the gates of Sung
Were closed to traffic, and the tinkling bells
Of burdened mules had slowly died away.
And caravans, with produce of the East,
Were drawn aside; and many drivers sat
In groups together and, with social ease,
Discussed all topics of more foreign parts,
Related legends, or, with dominoes,
Sought to retrieve their losses on the road,
While list'ning to the songs and lore of those
Who told weird stories when the toils of day
Had ceased, and all the joys of rest began.

An ancient man, whose cabalistic art
Had gained him reputation and respect,
Crept from his ill-kept hut, along the street,
And in his wonted place sat down to mark
The rising of the moon, which to him seemed
Like unto some great monarch of the sky—
A prophet by the world unrecognised,
Who came to tell of things beyond that age,—
Revealing much to this decrepit slave

* This poem originated from an old Chinese legend of the time of the Tang dynasty. The opening scene in the second part was suggested to me while visiting a beautiful and secluded spot in the vicinity of Amoy, South China.
AUTHOR.

Who, thus inspired, would sit for hours and hours
By fancy led, and conjure strange events,
Which he wrote down. Until at length the moon
Would steal away, leaving him there alone.

Now Uko was a young and comely youth,
Possessed withal of affluence and sense,
Who, at his uncle's house, was then a guest
In Sung, and on that evening went abroad
To hear all news brought in by travellers
From other cities many *le* * away.
And while he paused near where a temple stood
He saw this old man sitting on the steps
And, by the moonlight, reading thoughtfully,
And sometimes making entries in a book.
So Uko, like most youths of ev'ry clime,
Was curious to learn from this old man
The why and wherefore of his being there.
And what he found to read and write about,
And why he sought no homelier studio;
And, for the purpose of divining this,
He went to him, interrogating thus:—
"Pray, aged father, seeing you engaged
In lit'ry pursuits by this misty light,
May I—with all due def'rence to your years
And to discretion—in obedience plead
My ignorance of the benefits derived,
Or pleasure you conceive, from this wise course
Of evening study, and of writing by
No other lamp than cheerless rays of light.
Shed on this earth by yon ill-fated moon
Which, like this world, has burned down long ago;
And being now devoid of lambent power,
Exposes all its nakedness and shame
By turning, for its cold inconstant light,
Towards that flushed and heat-emitting orb
Which lures those wayward stars to its domain,
And borrows lustre from their fallen state."

The old man, from his thoughtful attitude,

* One hundred and twenty English geographical miles.

Did not at first bestir himself to speak.
Although to this intruder he gave ear.
At length he slowly raised his shrivelled form,
And looked to Uko, while he answered thus:—
"Since you, my child, presume to question me
On actions which by most are unremarked,
And seem, to strangers, of no interest,
I now will place reliance in your wish,
And let you share the unexpected bliss
Of learning what the will of Fate decrees;
And sorrowing—since you too eager be
To prosecute my singularity.
For 'tis not oft that casual visitors
To this far city of commercial fame,
Pause to inquire my pleasure, which is lost
To all unsanctioned students of the moon."

"Let me explain what book I now peruse—
That you may learn its value to respect.
This is a record of betrothal, which
Concerns all people who, beneath the vault
Of yonder heaven, breathe and know of life.
And their engagements, chronicled by me,
Will be fulfilled at the appointed time,
Though years may intervene and seas divide,
And many stranger planets rise and fall.
And in my pockets I have cords of red
With which I tie the feet of those who shall
Be joined together. And, when once they're bound,
E'en should they be of families opposed,
Of nations adverse as the unknown spheres
Of Life and Death—no human power can change
Their destinies, which bear the seal of Fate.
Yonder, my child, hard by the northern gate,
Stands a small shop where an old woman sells
Fresh gathered herbs to poorer class of folk;
And she has now an infant who will be,
In years to come, your fond and faithful wife.
So go to her, and treat the woman well;
For she is poor, and has upon her breast

What most to you is precious; and the babe
Will prosper where she is. So do not try
To better her position, for, 'tis well
That she remains in this quiet lowly state
Until such time as Heaven may unfold
To you her charms in all their maiden bloom,
That you may test their priceless chastity."

When Uko heard his future thus foretold,
He turned away and walked towards the house
Where he was staying; and was much perplexed
By these strange revelations which to him
Seemed to predict disgraceful poverty.
Or else why should he be compelled to choose
A fitting wife from such a lowly grade?
So he was sorely troubled, and he went
Next day to see this woman and the child.
And, when he saw them, he drew back and said:
"Cursed be the fate which that old dotard plans
For me, through this old harridan who vends
Her rancid herbs to any starveling,
And rears this squalid child, amidst the din
Of oaths and noisome airs that damn this place
To be my vestal bride eventually!
Oh may I be convulsed in agonies
Of death and torture, rather than become
A victim to this freak of destiny!"

At last, in desperation and disgust,
He felt determined to frustrate the scheme,
And from this trouble be at once released,
By hiring some assassin to go there
And bring about the graceless child's demise.
And, as he passed along a narrow street,
A poor emaciated leper came
Begging for succour, that he might exist,
Although in torture, not by hunger gnawed.
For life will fight in unsound armour long,
Holding its own through feculence and age,
Unless besieged, and driven out at last.

By cold starvation, through the gate of Death.
And Uko faltered as he slowly said:—
"Are you a man who dares to gain a prize
By making a bold stroke that carries death
To one who will grow up to be a curse,
And bring dishonour to the family
Of her afflicted husband, who will be
Snared into marriage by some witchery?"

"I am," replied the leper, "and I will
Do anything to ease my poverty!
For, faith, 'tis bad, when nibbled by disease,
To have no food, nor where to rest or die!"

"Then go," said Uko, pointing to the place,
"And if to-night you do remove from earth
That woman's child, which now rests on her knee
I will reward you with then thousand cash.
But be not cruel; perform your errand well,
And then return to claim your welcome prize."

And in the silence of the night they met,
And Uko heard the child had breathed her last.
With grave misgivings, he then went away—
A man dishonoured, and a slave to crime.
But never did he go again to see
The ancient city of his infamy.

. . . . . .

II.

A quiet old home, beneath the friendly shade
Of ever-swaying foliage, that the breath
Of dulcet breezes moved to cadence sweet,
Looked out upon a clear, deep stream which kiss'd
The yellow steps that mounted to a door
Where cobble-stones, worn down by many feet,
Led through, across a well-trod rustic yard,
Towards a chamber where grim effigies—
Strange senile figures of the pagan gods—
Sat in prevailing gloom; while burning spirits
Shed a grave light, emitting balmy fumes

Of sandalwood and garoo, which wrought up
Inord'nate fancies which awaking, seemed
To sanctify the silence of that place.

Upon the right, a curtained entrance led
Into a smaller room where frescoed walls,
Hung with quaint etchings and with tapestry,
Attracted sunbeams through the window where
Fantastic outlines, painted on the sheet. *
Cast motley shadows on the inlaid floor,
And upwards to the ceiling where were traced
Huge dragons and chameleons gaping down
Upon a marble table where there sat
An old man, clothed in plain and homely style,
Whose long white beard bespoke of life advanced
To quiet retirement from the toils of life.
His sallow face, with cheeks long furrowed out,
And eyes illumined by the light of age,
Seemed all in keeping with his dull attire
Which blended well with that sedative nook.

Upon the left, a carved and panelled door
Gave entrance to a neat apartment, where
Three lattice windows, shaded by green trees
Inhaled sweet perfumes of the fruitful land
From gentle breezes, as they veered and fell
To lighter airs that o'er the waters played,
Or sought the shore, and there, among the trees
Conversed in whispers, or, in voices soft,
Sang thro' the hours of darkness and repose
Seraphic songs untitled by this world.

And, in this room, a fair and youthful girl—
Whose blushing honours cast a halo round
Her stateliness and beauty, which were such
As any man would honour and admire—
Reclined amidst the sunshine of her home.
The Prefect, her adopted father, gave

* Oiled paper is much used in China, even at the present day, in place of glass.

To her all comfort he could well command;
And in return she proved most worthy of
His just affection, and his every wish
She studied with a womanly resolve
To make the days of age pass cheerfully—
And close beneath the shadow of her love.

One day the old man called her, and he said:—
"Luh-hwa, I have been thinking of you much.
And of your future, which concerns me more
Than I have cared to mention until now;
For, as you know, I've watched you faithfully
And fondly through long years, from infancy;
And know full well you do reciprocate
The love that prompts me early to provide
For your welfare, since Heaven has bestowed
On me the blessing of prosperity,
And you, my child, the modesty and grace
Which so refine kind Nature's rarest art,
And thus complete a masterpiece of life;
That I may now, with all paternal pride,
Prove faithful and unselfish at the last
By leading you to a straightforward man
Who best will guide you thro' the future years
When I shall be laid by among the rest
Of my ancestors on the Western hills.
And with regret, yet pleasure, I have planned
Your marriage with my good friend's only son
In whom I place much confidence and faith,
Since I have marked his actions carefully
And judged his worthiness impartially.
So not one measure has been left unweighed;
And, with integrity, I now conclude
That Uko is a loyal and honest man
Who has seen life—who knows its follies now.
And as he seems most anxious to secure
Your hand and heart by early nuptials,
I have most favourably considered this,
And have consulted all the wisest men;
And those who have pursued the omens far

Instruct me that the *branches of the earth*
And *stems of heaven*, indicate the *chăik*
As a propitious time for you to wed.
So as 'tis now the time of *bearded grain*,
In sixteen days the *summer solstice* comes,
Then you shall see your lover, and go forth,
With my fond blessing, to adorn his home."

And Uko married Luh-hwa, and he saw
That she was rare in beauty and in mind,
And was imbued with loving constancy,
But, strange to say, his fair bride always wore
Upon her brow an artificial flower,
Which looked uncommon, and her husband asked
Repeatedly her reason for the choice
Of this adornment worn unfash'nably.
But she was most evasive and did keep
The secret of her plume religiously.
At length, however, she unveiled the truth;
And, creeping shyly to her husband's side,
She laid her graceful head against his arm
And seemed to nestle there confidingly
And fondly as she looked to him and said:—
"Forgive me, Uko, for I have concealed
From you, my husband, that which might erase
My beauty—e'en your love: for now behold,
It hides a scar—it shades my early life!
But confidence is most essential now
That we are made, by Heaven, man and wife.

"I am the daughter of a mandarin
Who held high office in the Taotai's court
In Sung, full fourteen years ago, and more.
And I was but an infant in those days;
And, as my mother died when I was born,
A faithful nurse sometimes attended me,
When father was engaged officially.
This nurse was poor and she, kind woman, kept
A little shop close to the Northern gate,
Where she would often take me. And one night—
When I was sitting on her knee outside,

A robber struck me—see, the scar remains
Imprinted yet beneath his floral seal.
My father died when I was two years old.
And his good brother then adopted me,
And brought me over to a happy home
In Soochow, where I've ever since remained.
And so I'm called the Prefect's daughter, now."

When Uko heard his wife narrate these facts.
He for a moment stood in wonderment.
Then, with a cry of joy, he drew her near
And, with emotion, spake impressively:—
"My loved one! by the Gods! This floral seal
Conveys a message from the realms of Fate,
Demanding just repentance for the hurt
I caused you. For 'twas I who wished you dead.
For some strange wizard had predicted this:
That we should marry; but your childish face,
Impaired by the ill-favoured phase of life
In which it seemed apparent you were born,
Was no criterion of your beauty now—
Nor of your virtue; for indeed that place
Was most unwholesome, and the people low.
And I—in apprehension of my fate,
Defied the just decrees which are fulfilled:
For clouds, impending, darkened as they reached
The fancied horrors of futurity.
And I determined to remove from earth
The settled cause of swiftly-gathering shame.
And then I hired a villain to remove
You from my path of pictured happiness.
But now, thank heaven, it was not performed!
So, Luh-hwa, let us close the Book of Past;
For this has proved a floral seal of Fate—
That guards our love, through life—eternally!"

CHINESE MANDARINS.

VIII.—THE I.G. AND I.M.C.

SIR ROBERT (now Lord) HART is the justly celebrated I.G. or Inspector-General, of the I.M.C.—Imperial Maritime Customs of China—which, through his skilful generalship and labour, has of late years become one of the most ably governed and prosperous commercial institutions in the world.

Before dealing further with the commendable life and works of this benevolent autocrat, I will endeavour to briefly enlighten the reader with regard to the management of this gigantic establishment and the nature of the appointments therein.

The Customs service, established at every Treaty Port in China, consists of an Indoor and Outdoor staff. The Indoor staff being composed of one Secretary, several Assistants (first, second, and third Assistants, A and B), and Clerks (Classed and Unclassed), who are under the immediate supervision of a Deputy Commissioner. The outdoor staff comprises Tide Surveyors (Chief and Assistant), Boat Officers, Examiners (Chief and Assistant), Tide-waiters (first, second, and third class), and Watchers, under the control of a Chief Tide Surveyor or Harbour Master, both functions being generally performed by one man, according to the numerical strength of staff, which varies in conformity with the size and commercial prominence of the port. But both these departments are under the management and control of a Commissioner, or Acting-Commissioner, who is responsible to the Inspector-General for the conduct and procedure of that station. He is also invested with power to control the movements of the Revenue cruisers in that district, and also the Lights Department, with its engineers

and light-keepers. All communications to the Inspector-General—returns, reports, official despatches, and private letters—must first receive his sanction and signature before being forwarded by the Secretary to head-quarters.

Sir Robert (now Lord) Hart—the greatest and most powerful foreigner in China—is very little known, except by reputation, even by his own *employés,* for he lives a life of toil and seclusion. As no doubt many would like to become better acquainted with him, I cannot do better than quote from portions of an interesting article by a fellow Member of the Incorporated Society of Authors, Mr. Henry Norman, which appeared in the *Hong Kong Daily Press,* dated from Pekin, Nov. 30th, 1888:

"Sir Robert Hart left the Consular Service for the Customs—it was barely in existence then—in 1858, and in 1863 he became Inspector-General. And during the 30 years that have intervened he has been home twice, once for 12 months and once for six—that is, he has had in his whole lifetime less holiday than one of his subordinates gets every five years. He has never been to the Western Hills, a few miles away, to which all the foreigners in Peking retreat in summer, and he has never even seen the Great Wall, two day's journey distant. But next spring, he says, he is certainly going home. 'Pooh,' say people in the Customs Service, when I tell them this, 'he's been going home in the spring for the last ten years.' As for the services he has rendered to China, to England, and to the world, the statesmen of Europe know them very well, and it would take a volume to tell them to others. Besides the creation of the Customs Service itself, which will be his immortality, to take the latest example, it was he alone who concluded the treaty between France and China. All negotiations had failed, and matters looked very black and threatening. Then, as usual the Ministers of the Tsung-li Yamen came to Sir Robert. He agreed to take up the task on his two invariable conditions—that he should have a free hand, and that his connection with the affair should be kept a profound secret till he either succeeded or failed. Then negociation began by telegraph in cipher between his 'den' in Peking and the Quai d'Orsay, and very awkward ones they were. Month after month

they proceeded, and at last, when 80,000 Taels had been spent in telegrams, the end was reached, the Protocol was signed in Paris, and Sir Robert got into his chair and went to the Tsung-li Yamen. The Ministers were there, and he sat down to a cup of tea with them. By and by he remarked, with the apparent indifference of the Oriental diplomat. 'It is exactly nine months to-day since you placed the negotiations with France in my hands.' 'And the child is born,' instantly cried one of the Ministers, seeing the point and delighted at the truly Chinese way of conveying the information. And the funny part of the business was that all this time a special French envoy had been residing at Tientsin, chafing at the slow progress he was making, and not having the least idea that other negotiations had been on foot until he received word from home that he might return, as all was arranged. He was so angry that he would not speak to Sir Robert.

"After sending the last telegram settling the French business, Sir Robert went to the funeral service of Sir Harry Parkes, the British Minister, who had just died. As he entered the chapel of Legation a messenger caught him with a telegram. He stopped a moment and opened it—a despatch from Lord Granville offering him the post of British Minister to China. He accepted, after much hesitation, and his appointment received the Queen's signature on May 3, 1883. At his own request the matter was kept secret at home while arrangements were making for the succession to his position as the head of the Customs Service. Meanwhile a conservative government succeeded to office in England and telegrams from the Foreign Office kept asking 'May we not publish the appointment?' Sir Robert had seen, however, by this time that the Customs Service would suffer severely if he left it at that time, and this was more to him than any other honour in the world. He therefore telegraphed, 'Must I keep it?' and Lord Salisbury replying in very complimentary terms that he was free to do exactly as he thought best, he finally declined, the Empress, as his official reply truly but perhaps inadequately explained, preferring that he should remain.

"I have said that the statesmen of Europe are well aware of Sir Robert Hart's services, and the proof of this is that there are

few civilians so decorated as he. In England a Conservative government made him C.M.G., and a Liberal one added the K.C.M.G. (since made G.C.M.G.) Sweden made him a Chevalier of the Order of Gustavus Vasa; Belgium, a Commander of the Order of Leopold; France, a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour; Italy, a Grand Officer of the Crown of Italy; Austria, sent him the Grand Cross of the Order of Francis Joseph; America, has presented him with several medals of Republican appreciation; Portugal has decorated him with the Military Order of Christ; the Emperor of China has conferred upon him the coveted peacock's feather and the Order of the Double Dragon; and his Orange friends at Belfast—his native place—will no doubt be much interested and pleased to learn that he is, by direct gift from the Pope—nothing less than '*sub annulo piscatoris*'—a Commander of the Papal Order of Pius IX. As for knowledge of China and the Chinese, there is no one living who can be compared with him, and I learned more of the inner working of "Celestial" affairs during the fortnight that I had the honour of being his guest, than years of simple residence could have afforded.

"The 'I.G.' and Sir Robert Hart, however, are two very different people. 'I was calling upon Lady Hart one day,' said a lady to me, 'and as I wished to speak with Sir Robert I was shown into his office. I found the 'I.G.' there. Oh, it was terrible—I covered my face and fled.' The distinction has indeed been admitted by himself. He is not Jekyll and Hyde, but he is certainly poet and parson. Among the many verses he has written at different times I have seen one which avows the fact, Heine-like both in substance and form. It is called 'The Twin Hearts,' and tells how serious and unchanging one heart is, while

> "The other heart's a monthly rose;
> It blossoms oft and smells so sweetly
> It flowers and fades—before one knows
> It buds, it dies—does both completely!"

"The secret by which Sir Robert Hart has accomplished so much is an extraordinary devotion to method, most extraordinary of all for an Irishman. This is a subject on which he is far from

averse to giving good advice to men younger than himself, and on which, too, he establishes an immediate *entente cordiale* with his guests. 'Your early tea,' he says, 'will be brought to you when you ring your bell—please ring it once only, holding the button pressed while you can count three. Then will it be convenient to you to tiffin at twelve sharp? Because if not, I will tiffin myself at twelve sharp and order your tiffin to be served at any hour you like. I ride from three to five—there is always a mount for you if you wish it. Dinner at half-past seven sharp, and I must ask you always to excuse me at eleven.' The consequence is that every thing runs like clockwork in Sir Robert's household, and a guest is perfectly at home from the start. But the above methodity is nothing, in comparison. In the dining-room there is a big wicker chair, always covered with a rug, so that you cannot sit down in it. In that chair the master of the house has had his tea every afternoon for thirty years. Upon a shelf stands a large blue and white cup. Out of that he has drunk his tea for thirty years. And by employing the odd moments that his 'boy'—who is punctuality itself—has kept him waiting each day in that chair for that cup, he has managed during the last year or two to read the whole of Lucan's *Pharsalia?* Of course he has kept a diary since he could hold a pen. To test his preciseness I made a point of standing each day behind my door, watch in hand, till the clock struck twelve or half-past seven. Then I walked in to the central hall from my own side of the house. Sure enough the door opened opposite me and my host walked in from the other. It was like watching for a transit of Venus, or waiting for the apostles to come out of the clock at Strasburg at noon. And as I find I have not said a word of his outer man I may conclude these personalities by saying that he is of medium height and slight build, rather bald, with a kind, thoughtful and humorous face, a low voice, a shy and punctilious manner; that he is a most entertaining companion, a teller of countless good stories, fond of fun and merry company, devoted to his children—as well he may be, a player of the violin and 'cello, and a host whose care and thoughtfulness for his guests are feminine in their insight and famous in their execution."

To strangers Sir Robert is courteous, but cold, and to them sometimes appears even disagreeable. When amused, his smile is a very faint one. He very rarely laughs, is decidedly not fond of speaking, but listens attentively and thinks deeply. In reality he is a warm-hearted, typical Irishman, who is considered and recognised by the greatest powers that be as the very finest model of administrative mechanism—a monarch who rules not only by virtue of his power and position but by his profound knowledge and individuality.

Finding that the nightwork on the staff of a morning paper—especially in a tropical climate—was beginning to tell on my health, I obtained, through the influence of some friends, an appointment in the Imperial Maritime Customs. From my own personal experiences of nearly six years, I can conscientiously say and believe—and so does the Tsung-li Yâmen at Pekin—that no other directing power could be found to so ably fulfil the multitudinous and responsible duties of the "I.G.," or with the same aptitude for business of so difficult a nature.

I have always placed implicit confidence in the impartial justice of the Inspector-General, and, though I have sometimes taken it upon myself to appeal to him directly and privately, my trust has never been misplaced.

The only thing I altogether disapprove of in the Customs Service of China is the system of "Confidential Reports," written at stated periods by the Harbour Master or Tide Surveyor, respecting the conduct and abilities of the members of the Outdoor staff under his charge, which are not seen by the persons mentioned therein, who in many cases do not even know of the existence of these secret communications concerning them. As we all know, it is not always virtue and integrity which are rewarded, nor the best and most conscientious men who attain positions of trust. I have noticed more than once that the moderately good and unpretentious man, who endeavours to conscientiously work his way upward, is often treated with contemptuous disdain, and finds himself left in the rear by the *very good* man who politely "begs his way upward." And when he gets there, *what* an Imperious Tartar he becomes!

These "Confidential Reports" have been, and still continue to be, the cause of much trouble and discontent in the service. They give maliciously disposed persons, holding responsible positions, the power of working out with impunity any petty spite they may harbour against a subordinate. In these reports they can to an unlimited extent defame the character and altogether blast the prospects of the victim of their malice, who is quite helpless to justify himself, being in ignorance of the cause. In consequence he makes no progress, however well and honourably he may work, and there is no redress for him—he is practically powerless, he has no ground upon which to base a charge, and is dealing with an invisible enemy. Down he surely goes, his prospects blighted by an unseen hand—the hand which writes those "Confidential Reports." The man in whom this confidence is reposed should—putting aside his own private feelings and reasons—ask God to direct and guide him in these serious matters; and, in response, his conscience will befriend him. I reiterate that these reports are the curse of the service and a disgrace to it, a well-intended precaution too often misemployed, an honourable trust too often profaned; a too powerful instrument to be placed in the hands of any but the most tried and trusted. Many have discovered this to their cost.

In writing thus I am merely fulfilling a promise and repeating the outspoken or private opinion of hundreds of respected members of that service. While passing through Amoy some years ago for the last time, when a farewell banquet was given by the members of the Customs service there in commemoration of the occasion, I was then asked by them to in due course bring this grievance to the notice of their chief. I have taken this opportunity of doing so, trusting it may be the means of bringing about a modification *mutatis mutandis*.

Many members of the service blame their benefactor at Pekin. But as I have repeatedly urged—he is too noble-minded to suspect that his wise precautions are taken mean advantage of. He cannot be everywhere—he remains at his post—at the helm with which he guides, through calm and storm, the mighty merchantman and the destinies of its crew. The Commissioners,

as I once proved, are the ones who are to blame, and those who write the reports. Among the large number of foreigners variously employed in that vast and remarkably governed institution, but few of them know or hear much about the "benevolent despot" who so diligently watches the work, progress, and welfare of each individual working within that great commercial organization with which he is gradually encompassing the whole of China with an administrative control that is likely to remain pre-eminent and unsurpassed by any human power.

Lord Hart is an honourable man—just and impartial to a degree; and though stern and inflexible as the "I.G."—a faithful benefactor to many men, not only in the depths of his kindly heart, but also in his actions.

IX.—THE CHINA NEW YEAR.

THE pleasantest time in Shanghai is from October to March. Throughout the autumn, winter, and early part of spring, north-easterly winds prevail, and snow generally falls in December and January when foreign residents sometimes enjoy a little skating.

As the year draws to a close your servants become more polite and attentive than usual—for the New Year is approaching; and they now live in happy expectation of a good *cumshaw* (present) and a couple of weeks' holiday—more if they can get it—while you do the best you can with tinned provisions.

The greatest event in social and political life in China, the auspicious time when all debts are paid, all accounts "squared," and when the sublunary affairs of this vast empire are supposed to commence anew, is the New Year, before whose annual celebration even Imperial birthdays and marriages, most important occurrences, sink into insignificance.

The China New Year is the one great national holiday; and every individual in this so called "Celestial Empire" or "Flowery Land," from the Emperor down to the lowest coolie, looks eagerly forward to it in bright expectation of a month's respite from toil and responsibility, enlivened by the perpetual clamour of innumerable tom-toms, fire-crackers, and all manner of hideous and uncanny sounds so dear to the peculiarly constituted heart and unmelodious ear of a festive Chinaman, enhanced by unlimited revelry, excessive pleasure, and continual feasting. While all is made blissful by the sense of freedom which invigorates him

now that his debts are paid, his dues collected, and his cares laid aside.

All public business is suspended; all business houses, *hongs*, shops, and stalls, closed some nine or ten days before the New Year. The Taotai encases his seals and carefully hides them away, or entrusts them to the safe custody of his good spouse, knowing that it is strictly forbidden, during this festive season, to stamp or indite any official communication of whatever kind, or to judge, punish, or sentence an offender. So, like the rest of the people, being exempt from all responsibility, he prepares to enjoy himself.

The first important duty now is to thank and propitiate, and to give a good send-off to the all-powerful "God of the Kitchen"* who guards the destinies of the entire household, and who is about to make his yearly journey to heaven in order to render up an account of the proceedings and conduct of those tenants submitted to his care. According to custom, the superstitious members of the family prepare and lay out a tempting but decidedly sticky array of sweetmeats which, with much *koutowing*, they solemnly and reverently offer to the unwary spirit. After regaling himself with these tempting dainties during the heavenward journey he finds, on arriving there, that his lips are so firmly glued together that he is quite unable to make any disclosures which might entail unpleasant consequences to the sinners below, who, on the last day of the old year, heartily welcome his return, with a liberal sacrifice of vegetables, light cakes and brown sugar, and with volleys of fire-crackers, which are also supposed to scare away any evil spirits that may be hovering about with questionable intentions—spirits which have congregated in that locality during the past year, and which might, if not dispersed, imperil or contaminate the good influence or purity of the new one.

Great are the preparations now made for the New Year festivities; equally great is the demand for squibs and crackers of every size and description, and for tinselled paper—gold specks on a bright red background being the favourite pattern with

* Erroneously described by some English writers as "The Spirit of the Hearth."

AT MEALS.

which each individual, from the prince to the pauper, religiously adorns his abode, whether yâmen, private residence, hong, or shop, inside and outside. These bright papers frequently bear congratulatory inscriptions or signs composed ef three or four characters inscribed in black or vermilion. During this festive season no house would be complete, no household happy, without these garish decorations, which flutter from every post, shutter, lintel, door, implement, and carriage; while every conceivable crevice and corner holds a small sheaf of burning "joss sticks," whose fumes of sandalwood and *garoo* pervade each inhabited place.

At midnight on New Year's Eve family prayers are said, all members being present, the women included. Afterwards they attend at the temple, to make an offering to the gods of long coloured candles and gilded paper—the latter supposed to represent sycee and gold—which is burned in a large brass vessel, varying in size according to the distinction and preponderance of the god invoked; the Yeuk Wang, or creator of heaven and earth, coming first. Should the ashes of this gilded paper be of a white colour, it portends luck; if black, the reverse. And if any of the wicks of the lighted sacrificial candles be tipped with a bright spark, or should a pair of them burn out simultaneously, it is equally predictive of good fortune.

At dawn of day, on New Year's morning, the pleasure-seeking Celestial, if he has not been playing cards and drinking libations of *samshoo* all night, as is generally the custom, rises with a light heart and elastic step, and in the happy expectation of much pleasure dons his best garments, and, if an official, his elaborate robes of office, and his red, blue, or white buttoned hat, perhaps also adorned with a single or double peacock's feather (according to rank). With a packet of large red-coloured visiting cards (size, six inches by four) in his hand—or, if a mandarin, in the hands of his *tingchai* or messenger—he sets out, accompanied by his sons, if blessed with any, to pay his respects to his relations and friends, leaving one of the male members of his family at home to in turn receive and entertain expected visitors.

"*Go-ne far choi! go-ne far choi!*" (Get rich! get rich!) is the greeting he gives and receives while going through the elaborate

forms of *koutowing*, prescribed by the strict laws of etiquette so characteristic of his dignified but courteous, race.

On his being seated, the host brings forth a round, lacquer tray with partitions containing various sweetmeats, preserved fruit, raisins, almonds, dried laichees, and melon seeds. Then the members of the family offer their little presents of fruit and cakes, which are always accompanied by a small red paper packet containing a piece of silver and a few copper cash, which is kept by the recipient throughout the year, for good luck.

On this auspicious day Chinese ladies and gentlemen never comb their hair, nor the latter shave. Floors are not allowed to be swept, or even a broom to be used. Should they happen to do so, the new year would, according to their belief, be in consequence an unlucky one.

It is indeed a noisy, merry time—the China New Year; and no one enjoys his holiday better or more thoroughly than the hard-working "Celestial," who hoards up his few hard-earned cash day by day throughout the year; until the days grow into months and the cash into dollars, and the great time once more comes round when he will spend them like a lord.

ADMIRAL TONG YU'S VISITING CARD.

(Nearly full size.)

X.—ABOARD THE "FUNG SHUN."

ON the 1st of October, 1888, I left Shanghai for the more northern treaty port of Chefoo, of late years the sanitarium of the Protestant Missions in North China, which is situated in the Gulf of Pechili, on the northern side of the Shantung Promontory, in lat. 37° 33″ 20′ N., and 121° 02″ E.

It was a splendid day, and a nice exhilarating breeze from the northward cooled the atmosphere. After tiffin, I hired a fly and drove along the Bund to the C.M.S.N. Co's offices, and booked my passage in the "Fung-Shun," which I was informed would not leave before five o'clock. I then told the driver to turn up the Maloo; and away we rattled, for indeed those hired chariots do make a great clamour which is obnoxious to persons of a retiring disposition, but somewhat beneficial and indispensable to the swarms of buzzing brokers who are thus advertised and somewhat previously announced to the banks and *hongs* by the bone-shaking rattle of the dislocated fly. The Maloo, or Nankin Road, crosses the Settlement from east to west, and divides it into two nearly equal parts. The first half is lined on either side with European shops, but the western half is exclusively Chinese; the broad 60ft. road being lined on both sides with two-storied wooden houses, built in 1861 and 1863 to accommodate the ever-increasing population. This paved thoroughfare terminates at a wooden bridge spanning the Defence Creek, which forms the western boundary of the Settlement. To the left lies the Race-course and Recreation Ground, a broad expanse of level grassy ground, continually kept in order by a staff of Chinese gardeners.

In this enclosure stands a handsome Grand Stand, as races are held at Shanghai in April and November, when the best horses are usually brought up from Hong Kong by their owners to compete for the handsome prizes. The ponies entered for the races generally originate from the north of China—chiefly from Tientsin; and these "griffins" are sold periodically at the Horse Bazaar at an average of Tls. 50. *

The country road beyond the Defence Creek, known as the Bubbling Well Road, is the favourite drive for foreigners and is lined on each side with broad-spreading trees and secluded villas. After traversing this tree-shaded way for a distance of nearly three miles, lanes branch off to the right and left. The one to the south leads to the village of Sickawei, where a large Roman Catholic Monastery and Observatory have long existed; and from this point a thoroughfare conducts to the French Settlement. Near this road stood a once famous "Baby Tower," destroyed in 1864—a small oval building, in which parents, unwilling or too poor to meet the cost of interment, and from other more heinous motives, deposited the corpses of their children. As infanticide is allowed, and consequently common in China, these ghastly towers are to be seen in all parts of the country, and are partly filled with quicklime.

The name "Bubbling Well" originated from a pit or well, about 12ft. deep and 7ft. square, which stands near a pretty little temple called the Tsing Gan Sze, or "Red Joss House." At the bottom of this well there is from 3ft. to 4ft. of water; and a large quantity of gas, bubbling from the bottom, keeps the surface in constant ebullition.

After a pleasant drive along the Bubbling Well Road to Sicawei and back, I proceeded to the Kinl-ee Yuen wharf, situated in the French Concession. My "boy" was waiting there with my luggage.

Discharging the fly, I went aboard the "Fung-Shun," which was working cargo. A couple of stewards deposited my luggage in a spacious berth in the saloon, where I found old Capt. C——g writing at the cabin table. I had made his acquaintance before,

* One Haikwan or Customs Tael is equivalent to one dollar and a half.

so felt confident that with him as my host the trip would be a pleasant one.

Slapping me cordially on the shoulder with one hand, while grasping my hand with the other, he called the "Celestial" steward, and told him to bring the "whisky and soda" along. There is no doubt he was a most genial and courteous old gentleman, who had had considerable experience on the China coast, and was a most popular man; for China captains differ from the generality of men of their profession—they are a more hospitable, easy-going set, who philosophically stick to their lucrative posts, making the best of life in the Far East, removed from the social pleasures of Western civilization, until they have "made their pile," and are able to return home, to pass the rest of their days in happy retirement, brightened by the reminiscences of a well-spent sojourn in the far-off "Flowery Land."

Even now, when thinking upon those days, I am wont to associate old Captain C——g with them, and to recall the dry anecdotes with which he would regale us, while doing justice to the ample board, or sitting in his snug cabin and enjoying a smoke. During my experience of travel I have generally found that one becomes more sociable on a short trip than on a long one, for the simple reason that, knowing you are soon going ashore, you endeavour to make yourself agreeable and to enjoy the novelty of the situation. Whereas, on a long passage, you do not exert yourself to be very sociable and form acquaintances, unless, of course, you are troubled with *mal de mer* or *mal de penates,* and require sympathy, owing to the fact that you are fully conscious that there is ample time for such diversion and more than a fair amount of shaking-up in prospect.

Therefore, while soberly contemplating these and other novelties which only those who go "down to the sea in ships" are capable of realising, you become morose, your shipmates cynical and wearisome, and the mode of locomotion monotonous and unsatisfactory; until at length you get near the welcome port of destination. Then, snail-like, you all come "out of your shells" and, while trying to be thoroughly jolly good fellows, and show how elated you are to have neared the end of your journey in safety,

you finally evoke the supreme contempt of the captain and officers, who have been cheerful and sociable all the way, but at last feel thoroughly disgusted with you all.

I had just arranged everything and made my berth comfortable, when I heard the whistle blow loudly; and on going on deck was just in time to see the "Blue Peter" hauled down, and to hear the captain sing out lustily,

"Let go our stern-lines, there! Hard-a-port!"

Then the telegraph on the bridge rang for "slow ahead;" and in response the propeller commenced to make about thirty revolutions to the minute, as we moved off against the tide * into mid-stream, increased our speed, and steamed past the gardens, where many were promenading. Some waved their handkerchiefs to the captain and officers, who were almost too busy to pay much attention to these manifestations of goodwill.

Down the river we sped, passing two English men-of-war on the starboard side, to which vessels we dipped the ensign thrice. In an hour's time we were down to Woosung and steering our way cautiously out through the South Channel. The s.s. "Taku" left Shanghai some considerable time before us, but we left her astern in the vicinity of the North Channel, awaiting orders on a soft sandbank.

The day passed pleasantly, and when it grew dark one of the officers, who was a very fair musician, opened the saloon piano and enlivened the evening with some good old English songs, in which old Captain C——g and myself joined when we could find any passages to suit our unmelodious voices. Afterwards the skipper, who was very enthusiastic, persisted that we should have a glass of his proverbial "whisky-and-soda" with him; and then he related to us some experiences at sea in early days. We finally adjourned to the upper deck, but found that we were passing through a foggy locality; and the officer on watch was joined by the captain. So I went to my berth and "turned in" to do battle with the "musketeers"—as the second mate called them,—and have my slumbers disturbed at intervals by prolonged blasts

* Should a vessel leave or enter a harbour *with* the tide and anything happen to her, the insurance would be forfeited.

of the whistle which, on these foggy occasions, are apt to unhinge any delusions and arouse you to the fact that a daring mosquito of boring propensities is commencing operations on your nose, or trying to investigate your pyjamas which always seem to excite the curiosity of those skilful prospectors, who hover about your body with commendable patience.

Next morning I arose early, and after having a cup of coffee went on deck. The sun was just rising, and although I have travelled in many lands, and have watched the same golden orb rise and fall in all conditions, over sea, desert, mountain and valley, yet I have never been so impressed by the beauty of a sunrise as on that morning.

It was perfectly calm. To the eastward, just peeping above the distant horizon, a purple cloud—dappled with golden tints—skirted the margin of the waters, and at length (in ever-changing colours) climbed far into the desert of the sky, forming a wide arcade which cast down shadows on the torpid plain, beneath which a gentle tremor seemed to pass at times, causing its smooth bosom to gently heave in its profound slumber. At the back of this arcade, almost transparent clouds grouped themselves like far-away mountains, before which faint crimson rays—or bars from the arched crown of day—formed portals to the shut-out realms of heaven. And there, gleaming yet from the highest peak, was a bright star, standing by itself—the last of a mighty host.

It was a glorious sight! But while I stood regarding it, a number of "celestial" mariners surrounded me, and commenced plying their brooms to the tune of the water. So thinking it advisable to give them further scope, I was just retreating below when the captain came along the deck in his dressing-gown and escorted me to his berth, where I spent the best portion of my time. For he was, indeed, most entertaining, and "spun yarns" during all the "watches" of the day; and when, the sun was setting, instructed you that the best part of the day had only just commenced, and, lighting his long pipe, began another set of revelations in a new strain, gesticulating with the stem of his pipe to give a *bonâ fide* effect to some passages that were drawn from life. If you opened your mouth to communicate anything, you

raised his stock of lore, because he had evidently lived so long and seen so much that everything you said reminded him forcibly of something that had occurred before you were born, or that he had heard or experienced years and years ago, and it evoked a fresh narration of facts. When at intervals he went up on the bridge, leaving me to recover from the last powerful recitation, the fresh sea air invariably seemed to refresh his memory, and, returning, he would, with proper gravity, continue "yarning."

He invited me to lunch with him that day in his private berth, and I must acknowledge that I was never better entertained. He made an excellent master of ceremonies, with his nimble-witted humour and friendly attention; and the time passed quickly and pleasantly in his company. I do not think—as the monotony of even the pleasantest sea trips requires relieving at times—the reader will consider it out of place if I endeavour to recount, as nearly as possible, one of the interesting stories he told me—an adventure with pirates.

"Some years ago," he commenced, screwing himself further into his easy chair, and refilling his long pipe, "before there were so many coasting steamers about here, and still fewer Customs cruisers—and when this coast was infested with pirates—from the Gulf of Pechili to the Hainan Straits—I was in charge of a small two-masted schooner. She was a snug little craft, but with a good deal of top hamper—having long raking spars and a big spread of canvas, and was a regular flyer. Nothing could touch her with the wind a couple of points free. Run away from junks? I should rather think she could! I was never very alarmed about her being caught—only in calms. I tried to fit her with *yuhloes,* but it was no use, her build was not suitable for them: and in those days we sometimes had good reason to whistle and wish for wind, especially when there was valuable cargo aboard—night approaching—no wind, and, perhaps, a couple or three suspicious looking junks in sight.

"The Cantonese and Fuhkien pirates were the worst—they are bad enough now, when they get the chance—so you can imagine what they were like then. When I first took command of that schooner she was badly armed, only carrying a couple of nine-

pounders and half-a-dozen primitive muskets and cutlasses. The second trip I made was from Hongkong to Shanghai; and a great portion of our cargo consisted of raw Indian opium.

"I left port at five a.m. in the morning, and, as I got out of the Lyemoon Pass, two large junks that had been anchored close to the shore, drew out, and hoisting their huge lateen sails—one hand continually wetting them as they went up—shaped their course after us.

"I did not like the look of them, but I depended on the swiftness of my craft. As we got clear of the land, the sou-west breeze increased, and, with the wind on the quarter, away we went—soon leaving the two questionable junks behind and out of sight.

"Throughout the whole of that day and night, the wind kept steady and favourable; but towards morning on the second day it hauled ahead; and bracing up on the port tack, we lay to the eastward, clear of the land. In this manner we sailed all that day until midnight, when I brought her round on the inshore tack.

"About two o'clock that afternoon the wind fell light, but there was a bank of clouds slowly rising above the horizon to the south-west. I had been enjoying my usual afternoon siesta when—just as I awoke, and was lying in a half conscious state in my bunk—the mate rushed down and said that two large junks—evidently those that had left Hong Kong with us—were quickly overhauling us, coming from the southward.

"Hurrying up on deck, I at once descried the two vessels which were not more than four miles astern. It was so calm that we hardly had steerage way.

"'Those fellows mean to attack us before night comes on;' said the mate, who was also intently regarding them through his binoculars.

"It is not generally their way—to attack by daylight; they usually prefer to creep up in the dark—throw their stinkpots aboard—and follow up with a murderous rush. But I agreed with the mate—they evidently meant on this occasion to attack us before nightfall. They were smart—they knew as well as we did

that there was wind in that fast-rising bank of clouds to the southward, and that, once it got up to our little schooner, she would spread her wings and show them her stern in double quick time.

"There was no time to be lost—and I thought very thoroughly for a few minutes.

"'Mr. Mate,' I then said, 'call all hands on deck, charge the two nine-pounders with slugs, load the muskets, and tell the carpenter to come aft immediately. Have you any black paint?'

"'Yes, sir,—nearly a pot full;' he replied.

"'Very well, that will do,' I said. The carpenter then came aft, and—to the very evident surprise of himself and all hands—I told him to at once commence cutting one of our long round spare booms into five-foot lengths.

"They all thought me mad—but I said nothing. The work went on with a will, and as the round lengths were cut off, I had them painted black.

"Not even a catspaw * disturbed the surface of the sea; the sails flapped idly to and fro, and closer drew the two junks. As they came nearer, we could see all hands *yuhloaing* away at the great stern sweeps which propelled the junks fully two knots an hour. They were also bringing up a little wind with them, and the great bank of clouds was rising. It was a race between wind and junks, which should strike us first.

"Suddenly I saw a *sampan* lowered from one of the junks, and cross over to the other one with a line. And, as from bow to bow a large hawser, was drawn, I at once knew their plan of attack.

"It was an old Yangtsze pirate dodge, and a good one, too. They meant to sail along at some distance apart, but parallel with each other, and as they approached our craft, draw in on the hawser until it caught across our stern—as we were stern on to them—when both junks would swing round alongside, with us between, and board simultaneously.

"Though I had every confidence in my crew, which consisted

* Nautical term used to describe a light wind that only faintly ruffles the surface of the water.

of Manila and Ningpo * men, it was a very anxious time, and no doubt some of them thought I was temporarily bereft of my senses, especially when I brought out a dozen of my white shirts and all the straw hats we could muster, and made them dress up in them. They were also quite at a loss to account for the painted logs. But when these were all in readiness, I had them rested against the closed side-ports, and stationed a man, armed with musket and cutlass, at each. I now served out to every man three dozen rounds of ammunition, and had the two loaded nine-pounders, which I intended to work myself, placed aft, and partially trained them in readiness.

"The sun was slowly sinking, and it began to grow a little dusk. Nearer and nearer came the two pirate junks, the large hawser from bow to bow being gradually drawn in, and the stern sweeps plied more vigorously to give the necessary speed for their diabolical scheme. Now a great beating of loud-sounding gongs and the firing of crackers commenced, and wild, blood-curdling yells of fierce hatred and defiance made every man grasp his weapon more firmly, and prepare to sell his life dearly.

"All was oppressively silent aboard my little schooner, and the hands, standing in readiness at their respective ports, one and all looked towards me, awaiting my orders.

"Calmness was everything. So I chewed away at my lighted cigar, and calculated the distance.

"Six hundred yards—five hundred—about three hundred. Now they were about two hundred yards; the din was fearful; the time had come. I gave the first order: 'Raise the ports, men!'

"The large square side-ports were triced up—I stood with the fuse-strings of my two guns in hand. I pulled and shouted. 'Shove out the spars!'

"The shot from the nine-pounders simply raked their decks, and, with the last command, out went my mummy guns.

"Another minute and the pirates would have swept alongside; but the great hawser was slackened away and hauled aboard, and they sheered off as they saw our formidable array of guns and

* Ningpo and Cantonese men are considered the best seamen on the coast of China.

the white-bloused marines, as they thought, ready to work them.

"'*Bing sèun! bing sèun!*' (man-of-war! man-of-war!) I heard them shout as they manœuvred out of the way, expecting a broadside from us every moment. Getting my men aft, I fired volley after volley into them; and, while doing this, a breeze of wind came rustling along—the cloud-bank had reached us—the sails filled out, and away we went scudding before it.

"It was a mighty narrow shave! And you may be sure I took good care to be properly armed next voyage. But my dummy guns did their work—they saved a good little ship and her crew."

This ended that series of yarns. The captain went up on the bridge, and I took a stroll on deck until dinner, after which I turned in for the night. Next morning we kept in near the land, and at noon the day after arrived at Chefoo, and I took leave of the hospitable captain after a very pleasant passage.

XI.—CHEFOO AND THE FAMINE.

OWING to the salubrity of the climate of Chefoo, which combines the advantages of invigorating air, sea-bathing, absence of tropical heats, and a dry, healthy atmosphere, it has become the summer resort of residents from the Southern ports who have very appropriately denominated it "The Brighton of China."

The proper name of Chefoo is Yentai, and, as a writer says, "the city actually designated by the Treaty of Tientsin as that to be thrown open is Têng-chow Fu, the seat of government for the prefecture in which Yen-tai is situated; but as its harbour is merely an open roadstead, the establishment of a port for foreign trade was fixed early in 1861, at the bay of Yen-tai, which was already occupied as a naval station by the French portion of the expedition despatched against Pekin in 1860, the British head-quarters having been fixed at the Miao Tao Islands. about 35 miles to the eastward and almost opposite the city of Têng-chow Fu."

The name of Chefoo, or, to speak more correctly, Chi-fu, is really derived from the name of a harbour in the same bay, but unconnected with Yen-tai.

The province of Shantung, in which Chefoo is situated, was comparatively unknown to and unexplored by foreigners until, through the Tientsin Treaty, it was opened to foreign trade and travel. Its climate much resembles that of the Northern States of America, with their awful blizzards in winter; and its area is estimated at upwards of 66,000 square miles, with a population of quite 30,000,000. The interior of this province is almost a vast plain traversed from south to north by the Grand Canal, and

irrigated by numerous tributary streams of the Yellow River which also crosses the low-lying lands.

The inland productions consist of tobacco, herbal drugs, cereals, and a peculiar kind of coarse silk, known as *pongee*, obtained from the wild silkworms which thrive on oak leaves. But the chief articles of export from Chefoo, and also from the more northern Treaty port of Newchwang, and in which Europeans are interested, are beans, bean-cake, and bean-oil. The bean-cake is made in this manner: the beans or peas are thrown into a large round trough, the contents of which are crushed by a heavy stone roller, kept in motion by one or two mules. The pulse is freed from the oil by means of a primitive hand-press, and then packed in circular frames or hoops, which turn out solid round blocks or cakes about two inches thick and of varying diameter.

I arrived at Chefoo just in time for the half-yearly Regatta, and had the honour of sailing a very cranky boat called the "Tseuta," and coming in last, after a splendid cruise round the bay, but a sorry exhibition of my sailing prowess. We had a very fine day of it, and many ladies graced the occasion with their presence, and were most enthusiastic, greatly encouraging the competitors with their applause. The much-coveted Ladies' Prize was gallantly won by a fast little cutter-rigged boat named the "Wind Hawk." The Customs light-tender, the "Chi-Ming," which was moored opposite the Customs Club, was the flag-ship. There was a good breeze from the south-east, but the wind was somewhat unsteady. I also had the honour of coming in last in the Six-mile Sailing Race; but, judging from my experience in the long outward tack, I should imagine it was six leagues. I was received with ringing cheers as I came ambling home up the harbour on my beam-ends, about half an hour after the rest. But it was excellent fun.

On the first Sunday, a calm sunny day, I went out for a ramble, first visiting Li Hung Chang's temple, where Sir Thomas Wade and the Grand Secretary signed the celebrated Chefoo Convention in September, 1876, which stands on a hill to the southward, and from which a splendid view of the harbour and surrounding country can be obtained.

It was pleasant to stand on that eminence and contemplate the wild yet rural aspect the pretty harbour of Chefoo presented when viewed from the south. At the back—far to the southward—distant mountains, which were lost to one when sheltered by the dark hills that surround the Settlement, reared themselves in solitary grandeur, forming a noble background and hiding the plains beyond. To the northward and eastward, a tract of undulating country, studded at intervals with small native farms and cultivated patches of land, stretched for a distance of two or three miles to the base of high hills which branch away inland, where fresh highlands again rise up, forming a lonely range known as the Santien-men, or Three Heavenly Gates, beyond which, to the south-east, lies the old walled city of Hai-Yang, among grassy pasture lands.

I remained here exploring the temple for some time, and in the afternoon, having partaken of some refreshment that my coolies had carried for me, I again made a start, following a narrow footpath which ran parallel with the beach in a north-westerly direction, skirting the steep cliffs, from which I obtained a splendid view of the west side of the bay, where the small native village of old Chifu nestles beneath high hills, and which is chiefly inhabited by fishing folk, who are there nicely sheltered from the rough northerly gales of winter.

I then branched off to the right, and keeping to the path, crossed near a desolate stretch of land known to the Chinese as the "Forty-*le*-Beach," with which a most lamentable tragedy is connected.

Shortly after my departure from Chefoo, and subsequent to a very large and important seizure, of which I shall speak later on, and which had been made there, the Commissioner of Customs suddenly disappeared, and his body was afterwards recovered near this lonely place.

Mr. Edgar, Acting-Commissioner of Customs at Chefoo, and myself were directly concerned in this large seizure. My life, in consequence was anonymously threatened several times; but fortunately, I was transferred almost immediately afterwards to a Southern port, and Mr. Edgar went away on three months' leave,

entrusting all the duties of his responsible office to his *locum tenens*, Mr. Colin Jameson, a most popular and respected gentleman, who had only just arrived from the South, and was evidently mistaken for the Commissioner on leave, by those who were watching and waiting for revenge—probably hired assassins.

On the afternoon of Thursday, the 31st of October, 1889, Mr. Jameson left his office at the usual time, went home, and, after the regular four o'clock cup of tea, was seen by his "boy" and watchman going out of the front gate, and was afterwards seen again by a Mr. Judd at six o'clock on the east shore of the bay, walking leisurely along towards the "Forty-*le*-Beach." It was then growing dusk, and darkness must have soon afterwards set in. The unfortunate man was not seen or heard of again for some time.

Search parties were organized, and scoured the surrounding country for miles; but no trace of him could be found. Feeling perfectly sure, under the circumstances, that he was the mistaken victim of foul play, I wrote very lengthily on the matter, advocating that a reward should be offered for his body, and the claimant, after receiving it, be watched by a detective.

After a month had elapsed a large reward was offered, and a claimant soon presented himself in the person of a villainous-looking coolie, who led a party of residents to some jagged rocks in the vicinity of the "Forty-*le*-Beach," where the body lay. The dead man's rings had been taken off—this had evidently been done before decomposition set in—his gold watch and chain were gone, but his coat was buttoned up tightly, and the body was carefully laid and free of seaweed. There was also a mark worn round the neck as if done by the chafing of a rope.

The reward was given—my advice was ignored—and the claimant allowed to go his way unmolested, to divide the ill-gotten gain, no doubt, with his confederates.

It was getting late in the afternoon before I arrived at the little walled city of Ninghai, which is one of the prettiest places I have seen in the north of China. I entered by the south gate, through which numbers of humble men, women, and children passed homewards from the fruitful fields where their forefathers had worked before them. Some paused awhile to gossip with

THRESHING.

friends, buy from strolling pedlars, or join in a game of dominoes, to win or lose a few copper cash, a thousand of which go to a dollar.

It was a quiet and homely picture of Eastern life, and reminded me of the old pastoral scenes in the Holy Land. All seemed to wear the russet hue of indisputable antiquity, and the mule-bells tinkled gently as the poor and rich passed to and fro in their quaint garments. While the moss-covered walls looked down with their kindly light of age upon the children of that day; and from afar the sun-tanned fishermen came gliding home over the rippling waters as the shades of coming evening flickered on their amber-coloured sails. So I left the little city, as it was time to return, and took the path home by the cliff. It was a long twilight walk, and now and again a rabbit scurried timidly away. By the time I arrived home I was tired out, so went to bed early, and fell asleep with the pleasant sound in my ears of tired waves breaking on the shore.

The summer of 1889 was a memorable one to the people of Shantung, owing to the awful famine which laid waste and decimated the entire province. To give the reader some idea of the distress it occasioned, I will quote from a passage in my diary:

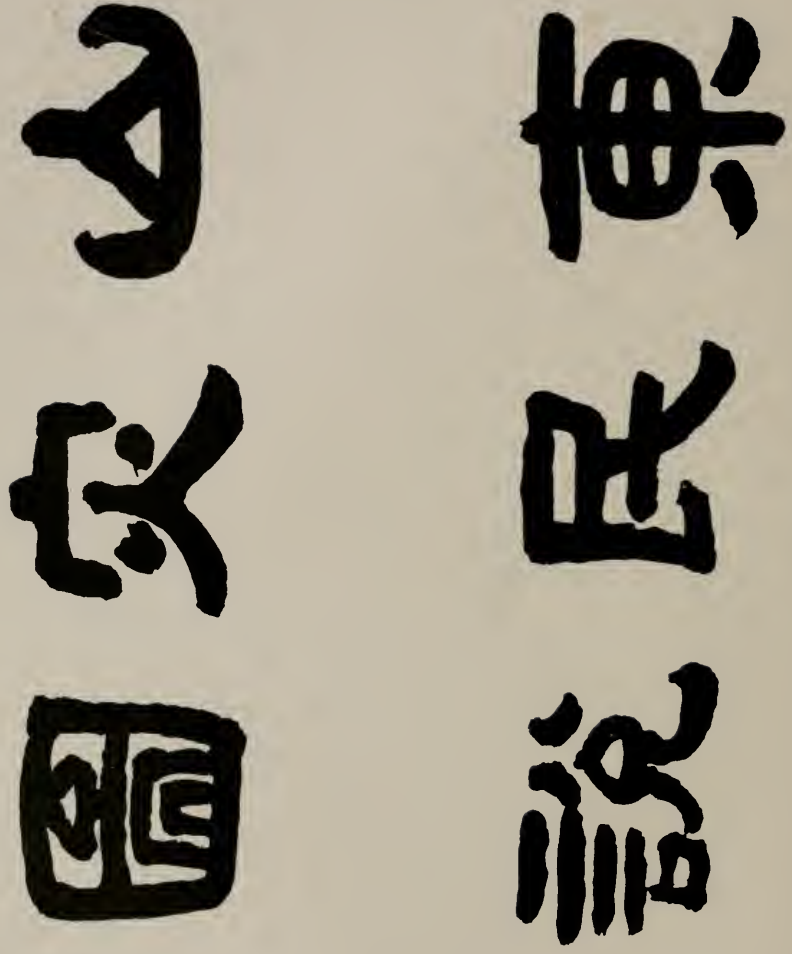
June 11th, 1889. Chefoo. — The province of Shantung is now the stage of heart-rending distress, caused by the late inundations of the Yellow River. At the close of last year the slender crops which had survived the floods were weakened by hoar-frost, and have finally been subjected to a season of almost unprecedented drought, which has destroyed everything and reduced the miserable population to the most abject poverty and starvation. Hence the daily arrival at our outports of emaciated outcasts who, having at last evacuated their wretched mud-huts leaving their offsprings dead, trudge to the 'margin of unmitigated distress,' and lie down about our very doors to die.

In the latter end of January, the people of Chin-chin-fu were for the first time, since the floods, visited by some missionaries who discovered that the price of very inferior grain in that district had risen more than 100 per cent above the average price; and the magistrate there would not allow any surplus wheat

佳兒賤賣
不忍棄死
有一人以錢六千買得
男女十三名口其父母平日
愛如珍寶至此亦不顧也
并有一小孩摘一饅頭者蓋
不忍見其餓死耳至今
又過半月其慘狀更不知
如何易子而食於
今始信

心肝人肺三路行四十貫。

割開後人影步街頭見有貴熟食者買心肝肺之囫囵煙供人尾食者人肝
至其家則滿缸豉酸入內而食者去人肝
人肺也送執而送諸官

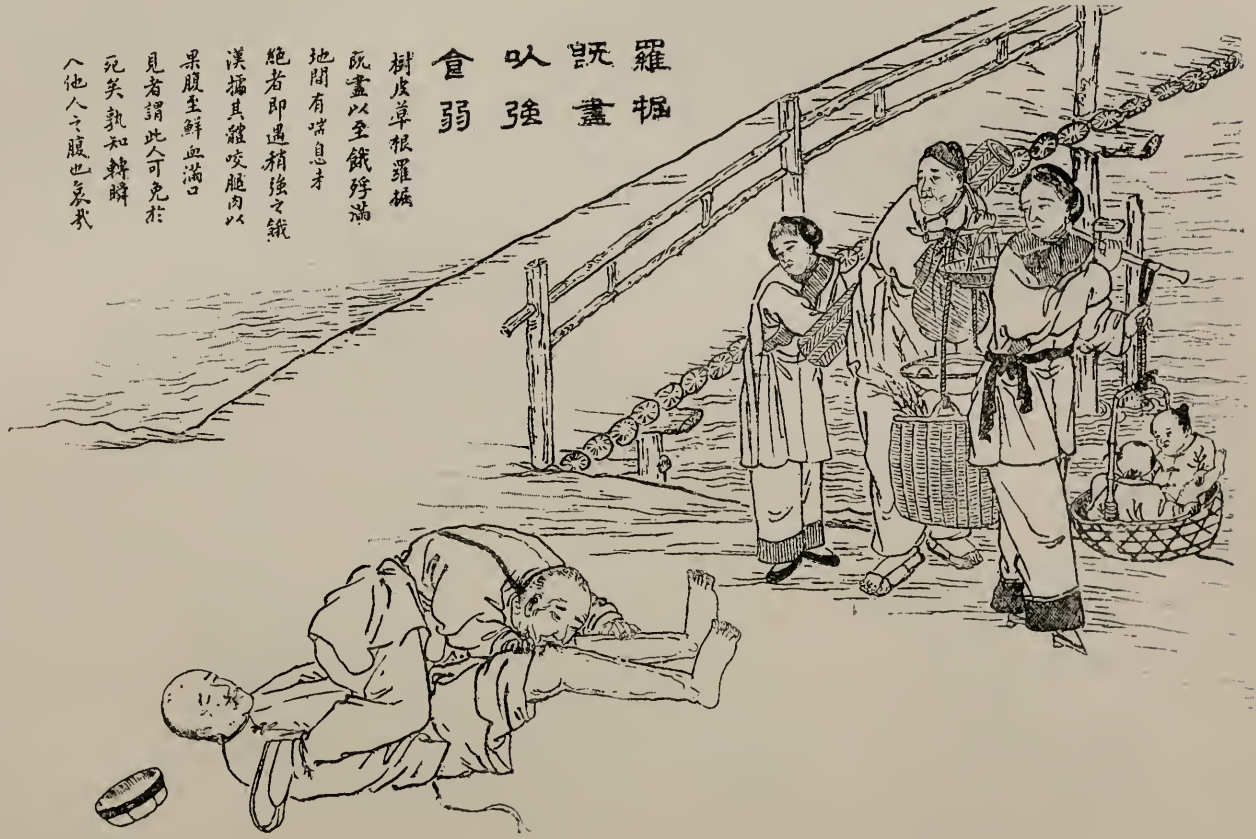


山東災民圖狀四則見三月廿四日申報為　東撫張朗帥疏稿書後云係南田後人客東時目見如此條狀雖錢石亦為下淚我輩身居樂土飽食暖衣此時不種福田更待何時近来外洋助賑尚不分畛域集成鉅款寄華散放可見人之好善誰不如我或曰雖有此願柰力不足何則云盡我一分之力勉行一分之善即多活一人之命譬如逢有力之人則轉相勸勉逢不識字人或婦豎則解以圖畫情狀勸以大義見有助賑者極口揄揚使其益加奮勉自奉不妨隨處從儉節無益之費人能如是存心災地雖廣不難補救於萬一也余人微言輕不足為災民紓急友人陳冠玉具名盡手有同志爰仿鄭俠流民圖之意屬其繪狀付石印庶幾貼諸壁上感動善念推廣善緣不拘解囊之多寡擲交各賑所彙寄散濟登皆大歡喜之場操必有餘慶之券是則下私所禱幸者爾

光緒己丑四月會稽王廷訓謹識

西蜀楊鍾靈謹書於春申江上

上海富文閣代印


羅掘既盡以強吸弱
食樹皮草根羅掘既盡以至餓殍滿地間有喘息者絕者即遇稍強之餓漢搶其雜咬腿肉以果腹至鮮血滿口見者謂此人可免於死矣孰知斡瞬又他人之腹也哀哉

山水暴發民歎其負
山東水災連年疊見上年山水驟發武濟等屬數十州縣村庄俱成澤國被淹情形數前史固有非筆墨所能盡其悽狀者爰繪圖以狀之

or millet to be exported in aid of the famine-stricken people. In consequence, our missionaries, who expended daily over 1,000 Taels, found their work of distribution encompassed by obstacles which, in spite of their most commendable endeavours, they have been unable to surmount.

But now the famine has reached its most fatal climax; there has been no rain for weeks, and the country inland is completely parched. Hard as our missionaries toil, while endeavouring to tide over this season and alleviate the acute sufferings of the needy, yet the hand of Death passes ever before them through the land, carrying away, with disease and hunger, thousands of weary souls who have prayed for succour in vain, and who now fall back before the eyes of our broad-hearted Christian labourers, who are compelled to bitterly acknowledge their inability to cope with the stupendous difficulties, and give the needed relief. This is owing to the nefarious practices of the Chinese officials, the inadequate amount of grain placed at their disposal, and the increasing demand from fugitives—men, women, and children, who eagerly crowd forward to be rescued from the grave.

Distracting accounts of almost incredible privation daily reach us through these refugees, forcibly revealing to us the awful ravages of this famine. It is reported and credited, especially by the Chinese, that numbers of poor wretches, reduced to the last painful extremities of starvation, and being both morally and physically unable to any longer withstand the biting pangs of hunger, have resorted to cannibalism; and others, whose children have been spared, now sell them for a mere trifle into brothels, where they will linger for a few years in iniquity and bondage, to find an early, unhonoured grave.

Some grotesque Chinese prints, vividly descriptive of the awful sufferings occasioned by the famine, were printed and widely circulated in the Shantung Province. (See Plates).

The resources for transportation inland are very limited, and a great portion of the relief mission is reluctantly entrusted to petty mandarins. Consequently much valuable time and money are irrevocably lost before the needed succour arrives at its destination. The China merchants' steamer, "Kwangchi," a small light-draft

LI HUNG CHANG'S TEMPLE. CHEFOO.

vessel, has lately made several trips up with rice and millet to Li-tsin-ho, a place situated about 140 miles to the westward of Chefoo, where a small shallow river, supposed to be the delta of the Saou-hwang-ho, or Old Yellow River, discharges itself into the Gulf of Pechili.

The grain is discharged at Li-tsin-ho, and carried up the shallow parts of the river to Ti-mun-kwan, a town about forty miles farther to the south-west, whence it is forwarded to the officials of the outlying villages, who use their own discretion in its distribution, and are supposed to invariably "squeeze" as much as possible for themselves. A tax is levied in this province on the property of native landowners, according to the size—not product—of the ground; and the Sub-Prefect of the district is, as a rule, answerable for the money. However, many petty officials, whose duty it is to collect this money, received orders from the Imperial Treasurer not to enforce the tax during these hard times, but they have still continued to do so. For that reason, Sheng, Taotai here and Prefect of Tung-chow-foo, Lai-chow-foo and Teng-chow-foo, left yesterday afternoon in the Chinese transport "Taean" for the latter place, where he intends to very thoroughly investigate the matter. He has full authority from Pekin to summarily discharge any of those officials whose conduct he considers unsatisfactory. This may be the means of doing much good for the helpless people, and may also indirectly aid our hard-working missionaries.

XII.—ANIMAL AND REPTILE MYTHS.

IN the Chinese classics, and in all their ancient books, we find the fox mentioned as an animal of solitary habits, of a cunning and crafty disposition, and possessing extraordinary supernatural powers. Their philosophers ascribe to him a very long life, from eight hundred to a thousand years; this remarkable longevity being attained through living in holes, ruins, caves, and other places shut out from the rays of the sun. They say that at the age of fifty the fox can take the form of a woman, and at one hundred that of a young and lovely girl. Kao-sai, or "Our Lady," is now the dignified title given to the male fox-elf who can thus transform itself. So bewitching can it appear, that all men are fascinated and fall victims to its ravishing charms; hence the foolish custom, practised by poor deluded Chinese prostitutes, of worshipping the fox-god Kao-sai, and praying him to favour them in the eyes of men. At the advanced age of 1,000 years the Chinese believe that Reynard is actually admitted into heaven and becomes a celestial fox.

Chinese writers describe these animals as resembling small dogs, with pointed nose and long tail—there being different coloured species—yellow, black, spotted and white, the latter variety being considered very rare. According to history these white foxes, or "silver foxes" as they are called, whose fur is very beautiful and costly, used to be regarded as animals of good omen, especially in the time of the Emperor Yu (B.C. 2150), and their skins were much prized even in the Chow dynasty (B.C. 1000). The approach of a black fox has generally been said to augur prosperity, but

as a rule these shrewd and graceful creatures are looked upon as foretokens of misfortune.

Chinese philosophers say that in the heart of a fox there is an exquisitely bright gem, smooth, and of a whitish colour, resembling a pearl, which is supposed to impart to this animal its extraordinary powers. In most parts of the north of China the fox is regarded as an animal of good presage. In the winter time, if the footmarks of a fox are seen leading across a frozen river or lake, people cross without hesitation. They say that when the animal is crossing frozen water he does so slowly and cautiously, from time to time putting his head down close to the ice and listening for the sound of the water beneath, thus estimating its thickness and stability.

In the celebrated commentary to the "Spring and Autumn" of Confucius we are told that as the fox grows older he becomes wiser, and more cunning; and is able to foresee future events and coming disasters. From year to year, and from century to century, he inhales and absorbs the more highly impregnated essence of matter, until his mental faculties and divinatory powers become wonderfully clear and supernal. So that at last his mental eyes can see through the darkness of a thousand years, and his bodily eyes penetrate more than a thousand *le*, seeing and fully understanding the past, as well as the future. He is therefore able to prognosticate his own end and prepare himself for it, thus being blessed with a "correct" or "perfect" death as the Chinese say.

There is always something refined and beautiful about these mythological dissertations of the ancient writers, and the beautiful part about the much-abused fox now comes in. Knowing his end to be drawing nigh, Reynard journeys home to his native place, where his parents lived and died, and, lying down at the foot of a hill, with his fore paws folded and extended, and his face turned heavenward, in this position he calmly and decorously breathes his age-honoured life away.

Fairy foxes, or "Hu-li-jin," play a very prominent part in Chinese mythology and folk-lore, and some very strange stories are told of them, particularly in the celebrated works of Chu Shi, and in a popular collection of tales known as the "Lius-chi-che-

yi," published in 1766. The word "Hu-li-na," or female fox, is much used as an epithet, in the same manner as we say "vixen" or "she-fox," being applied against over-dressed and scandal-talking women.

A well-known Chinese legend relates how once a young gentleman was walking in the country near his home when he noticed that he was being followed at some distance by what appeared to be a young woman. Waiting for her to approach nearer he was pleasantly surprised to find that she was a girl of more than earthly beauty, who also possessed the most elegant feet. He at once fell desperately in love with her, and they soon afterwards married. Strange to say this lovely bride always left her husband's side every morning before dawn, remaining away throughout the day, but returning at sunset. He repeatedly remonstrated with her, and asked her reason for doing this, but she took no notice and always made the excuse that she went home to her mother who was old and required her assistance. After a time the husband began to lose his health, growing weaker and thinner, and at length he died. His beautiful wife—who was in reality a fox-elf—then disappeared. She had gradually educed his strength by her diabolical power, and thus killed him.

The Chinese are taught, and firmly believe, that many thousands of years ago there were no monkeys, and that they came into existence in this manner. There was once a very rich Chinese family whose serving-maid was a young girl, whose mother, being old and blind, depended entirely on her for maintenance. This dutiful daughter used to save what little food and dainties she could and carry them home to her aged parent. Her mistress, one day discovering this, secretly put some filth in the pot of rice which the girl took home with her. On eating some of it, the blind woman became very sick. Crying bitterly, she accused her innocent daughter of baseness and neglect. Whereupon the poor girl wept bitterly and told her mother that she was not to blame, and that it had evidently been done out of spite and to prevent her from using the food; but that in future she would buy their own food out of her scanty earnings.

She did so: and one day an old man came to the house and said that, as the young girl was so duteous to her parent, she should prosper and become rich. As her employer had behaved so wickedly towards her, it was decreed by the gods that the whole of that family should be transformed into monkeys; and she was to place hot fire-irons on the chairs in their sitting-room when preparing their dinner on the morrow.

On going to work next morning the young maid found that, in accordance with the old man's prophecy, the whole of her employer's family were turned into hideous monkeys, which were leaping about all over the house, making a great noise.

Having, in obedience to the wizard's commands, placed the hot irons upon the dining-room chairs, she laid the bowls of rice and vegetable on the table. When seating themselves before it the animals got very burned, and, all rising together, fled away from the house into the mountains, where they remained and multiplied. The fortunate young maid, through her exemplary conduct, was allowed to take possession of the property, and lived with her blind mother in peace and affluence.

Like us, the Chinese have their domestic pets, the lower classes often including a pig among them. Should a dog follow a person or attach himself to a family it is considered highly predictive of wealth and prosperity. But should a cat do so, it is regarded as a most inauspicious omen, portending reverses and poverty, so that such a visitor receives but scant hospitality. However, cats are not generally disliked, and grace the fireside of most families. According to tradition, we are led to believe that, in ages of remote antiquity, dogs and cats were able to speak like human beings, and that their dumbness was brought about by themselves in this manner:—There were two sisters, who lived at some little distance apart. One was rich and the other poor, but the latter possessed a wonderful stone of great value by which all things could be converted into gold. This the rich sister coveted, and at length borrowed. The stone was not returned, however, and the poor sister, after vainly begging for her priceless gem, became very miserable, and quite despaired of ever seeing it again. At last her favourite cat and dog, seeing how distressed she was,

offered to try and recover it for her. She had always been kind and good to them, and they were anxious to show their gratitude by thus assisting her. So the two faithful animals set out together, soon arriving at a river which they had to cross. The dog was able to swim, but the cat could not; so the dog very kindly told the cat to mount on his back, which it did, and he swam across safely with his load. Both scampered off together towards the wicked sister's house, which was enclosed by a high wall. On coming to this, the cat was able to jump over, but the dog could not; therefore, as one good turn deserves another, the cat let his companion get on its back, and sprang over with him. Then, watching their chance, they cautiously entered the house by a back door, and, after much searching, found the right room, and recovering the stone, carried it back in triumph to their mistress, who was quite overjoyed and made much of her two sagacious pets, who at length became jealous of her attentions and quarrelled.

Said the dog: "Think how I carried you across the river. What would you have done without me?"

"Ah," replied the cat, "think how I carried you over the wall. Pray what would you have done without me?"

As both questions were alike, unanswerable, they fought, swearing they would never be friends again. They were struck dumb. Hence the dumbness and enmity which has since existed between these animals.

The saliva from a dog's tongue is supposed to contain extraordinary healing properties. A Chinese legend tells how once an emperor was sick nearly unto death with a sore leg, which gave him great pain and discomfort. He consulted the most eminent physicians in the empire, but none could help him, and he grew worse. Now this monarch possessed a very comely daughter, and he at last promised her in marriage to anyone who should heal his leg. His own faithful dog now began to constantly lick the wound, and it soon healed completely. The grateful emperor, according to his promise, rewarded the noble animal with his daughter, and they married. Then he gave them a ship, a large sum of money, and many valuable presents; and they sailed away to the southward, afterwards settling near the city of Kiungchow,

on the island of Hainan, where they lived happily together the rest of their life.

This story is told and actually credited by the people of Hainan, from whom I gleaned it.

One day when I was visiting a Chinese friend of mine, he took me into a room and pointed to a group of small pups.

"There are nine pups there," he said, regarding them with evident satisfaction, "and that one you see lying on the top of the others is a king of dogs. For should any dog have nine pups, which very rarely happens, one of them is a king. If the Emperor knew that I had these I should have to send them up to him, because the king-dog is regarded as valuable. For it always sleeps in the middle and on the top of the other dogs, and has a very precious stone in its inside."

"Does he ever bring the stone out?" I ventured to inquire seriously.

"No, not until he grows old; then he sometimes brings it out and plays with it. But you have to watch the animal very closely to detect the stone, as he always conceals it."

He also told me that, on the day of a king-dog's birth, all the dogs in the neighbourhood come to the front door and stand about in an inquiring, interested manner; and that should any dogs be fighting they will at once desist if a "king dog" comes up, as they all fear it. He also seemed to confidently believe that if any person robbed the animal of its precious stone it would first try to kill the thief and then die itself. I have since heard all this repeated over and over again in different parts of China, with the addition that if a tiger has three cubs, one is a king of tigers, and also has a very valuable stone inside, with which it sometimes plays when of mature age.

The snake also claims considerable attention in Chinese fables, many of which referring to this reptile and its supposed dominiacal powers, are undoubtedly of Indian origin. Throughout the "Celestial Empire" traces of serpent worship are frequently found, especially at Canton, in the Ching Shi Mo, or Green Serpent Temples, and also at Wuchow-fu, where liberal sacrifices are offered at the magnificent snake shrines, and where a venomous-looking green

snake does actually condescend to show itself at times among the rafters of its sanctuary, whence it descends to suck the sacramental eggs so liberally supplied by its worshippers.

This snake, like many of its kind, is supposed to have a very precious jewel, called a "nun," in its head. The natives of India have a similar belief, and say that any one who can obtain one of these rare gems will be enabled by it to fly.

A writer in a Chinese journal says: "Yet stronger evidence of the hold which serpent worship has over the Chinese mind is afforded by the fact that during the height of the Tientsin floods, in the autumn of 1873, Li Hung-Chang, a man distinguished for his clear commonsense and administrative ability, joined in offering worship to a miserable little snake which had been picked up and placed in one of the temples, afterwards extolling, in a memorial to the throne, the divine favour exhibited by the appearance of the wretched reptile."

In a Chinese novel, entitled "Loei gung-tap, or Thunder-head Pagoda," we read of a white snake, eighteen hundred years old, possessed of supernatural powers, able to work extraordinary spells, and also to transform itself into a human being, generally assuming the form of a young and beautiful damsel. This snake had a servant; and the way in which they met for the first time, is told most graphically:

"Hangchow is a very lovely place. Here are the palatial residences of princes and nobles, and gorgeous flower gardens, and archaic temples are scattered about the place. Among these the garden of Prince Chow was notorious for its luxuriance; but the Prince had long been dead, and his garden was deserted by mankind. In it were miniature mountains, pillars, and altars, almost equal in magnificence to the garden of the Imperial Palace. Here there lived an enormous black snake—which had been in this place for eight hundred years and more, and could ascend into the sky and take human form. One day, seeing a white snake entering the garden she hastened to prevent it doing so, saying: "Where do you come from, to thus disturb and encroach upon the privacy of my garden? Do you not greatly fear my anger?" The white snake, who had also assumed human form, only smiled and said

"Do not talk about your power so much, but listen to what I am about to say. I am a powerful white snake, come from the mountain Cavern of the Winds, where I have lived more than eighteen hundred years. But as I am not as powerful as I wish to be, I have decided to change my residence, therefore you must let me live in this garden: and why should we quarrel, both being snake-spirits?" But the black snake was not to be pacified, and wrathfully exclaimed, "This is my garden. You are a vagrant spirit from some distant place. How dare you try to deprive me of what is, by right, my own? But if you imagine yourself more powerful than I am, let us fight three rounds, and see who wins the mastery." The white serpent again smiled slightly, and replied. "I do not wish to do battle with you—it is not seemly; neither have I any desire to injure one of my own species. But since you so much wish it, I will fight with you on condition that whoever shall be victorious becomes mistress, and the conquered one shall always remain her slave." Whereupon the black snake, in its rage, drew her sword and cut at her adversary, who, quickly drawing two swords, held them before her crosswise. In a few moments the skill and agility of the white snake manifested itself; for, by murmuring a few incantatory words, she worked a spell, and the sword was torn from the grasp of her opponent by some unseen hand, and she was at her mercy. "Do not contend any further, spare my life," the black snake now implored, kneeling down. "I admit that you are the stronger of the two; I will serve you always faithfully as your slave." They made friends, and the beautiful white snake entered the garden with her servant, who afterwards proved her devotion for her mistress in many ways, and they loved each other and lived happily together."

According to tradition, if a snake behaves itself well during its earthly career, and never bites any person during that time, the gods will transform it into a "Sky-dragon," allotting to it an abode in heaven.

The Chinese believe that there is a Sky-dragon, and an Earth-dragon, the former having a long tail, and the latter none; but both possessing extraordinary powers. If the Earth-dragon even

moves an eye or ear it causes a slight shock to the earth, and if it moves its legs there is in consequence a terrible earthquake, causing houses to fall and great loss of life. But should this awful monster take a freak to turn round or shift its position, the whole world would collapse.

The Earth-dragon is supposed to have been created in this manner:—Many hundreds of years ago a Chinese schoolboy one day picked up a small snake, and putting it into a box carried it to school, where he placed it in a drawer, giving it plenty of food. It became a regular pet amongst the boys, being a very good-tempered and kindly disposed reptile. One day the head-master happened to go to the drawer, and was frightened nearly out of his wits, for the snake, which had grown to an enormous size, came gliding out, passing near the affrighted man, and went away up into the neighbouring mountains. On hearing of its departure the boys were very sad, but they soon found out its whereabouts, and on half-holidays paid it friendly visits, taking baskets of food and dainties for its consumption. In return the snake greatly loved them—especially its young master, who was a good lad. Now this young boy's uncle became dangerously ill, and at last, as doctors were of no avail, asked his nephew to go and consult the friendly snake on the matter, and ask its advice.

Setting out for the mountains, the obedient boy did so, and stated the case very fully to the kind-hearted reptile, which had by this time grown into an immense monster. It considered awhile and then, opening its mouth wide, told its young friend to climb in and cut a piece of its tongue off, and give this to his uncle medicinally. The boy did so, and the sick man, finding it did him good, asked his nephew to try and obtain another piece. The kind-hearted snake willingly consented. Another morsel of its valuable tongue was snipped off, and the uncle's health improved rapidly. A third time the lad came and asked for yet another piece, as the sick man found it so beneficial. Again the good snake opened its capacious mouth, and the boy climbed in. But, somehow or other, he cut off too large a piece of tongue, and hurt the snake so much and so suddenly that down came the upper jaw—crunching the poor lad up and killing him outright. Of

course the snake was quite broken-hearted, as it had never intended to hurt even a hair of its young friend's head. The gods, who had fully intended to reward the noble reptile for its deserving conduct and unselfish deeds, by making it a Sky-dragon, could not do so under the circumstances. So they created it an Earth-dragon instead, and in the bowels of the earth it has reigned ever since.

With regard to live stock, hens very rarely crow, but when they do the Chinese kill them at once, as it is a bad omen. If a cock crows at any time between seven or eight p.m. it is significant of a fire; at 10 p.m. robbers; and at midnight, that all is well.

There are thousands of similar omens and legends too numerous to mention, each of the latter pointing some good moral. But I have merely endeavoured to give the reader an idea of the style and purport of these quaint animal and reptile myths with which Chinese literature abounds.

XIII.—LIANG AH TOU'S SCREEN.*

DURING my residence in Chefoo, I became acquainted with a very intellectual and respectable old Chinaman of the beggar-by-choice type, not a rare specimen in the "Flowery Land", where every man with a comfortable income wears such ancient garments that even the professional beggar at times eyes him with suspicious envy. For all prosperous people live in bodily fear of the avaricious Mandarin monster, whose "squeeze" is 90 per cent of sterling silver out of a bamboo hut, not to mention the extortion from a more pretentious structure. Well, old Liang Ah Tou—for such was his honourable name—used to walk out every evening, and he always walked in the same place, in front of the Custom House, or *Haikwan*, as the Chinese call it. One afternoon he came into my office and addressed me in very good English making inquiries respecting the shipping in harbour.

I was rather surprised that such a rakish-looking old pauper should speak English so well—not "pidgin English," but "pucka" English—and that he should have any cause to be interested in shipping affairs. He was a regular old curiosity, and I took possession of him as such, asking him to take a seat, which he did. I then offered him a drink. This seemed to please the old fellow, but yet he refused all my pressing invitations to partake of a whisky or brandy and soda, port wine, sherry, or beer. So I guessed he had never got much beyond Chinese *samshoo*. I

* This originally appeared in the columns of the London *Globe*, in a different form, and under the title of "Tsing Fong's Screen," January 22nd, 1895.

was wrong, though. The truth was he only drank champagne, but was too much of a gentleman to tell me so. He then extracted a cigar case from the depths of his greasy-looking old garment, and offered me a remarkably good Manila.

We became friends, after a fashion; but he was very reticent as to himself, and apparently very poor, until he knew me thoroughly, until he

> Had judged my worthiness impartially,
> And not one measure had been left unweighed.

Then he asked me one day to go home with him to "chow." I accepted his invitation more out of curiosity than expectation. After traversing in single file a regular labyrinth of back streets and narrow alley-ways, crowded with lean men and mangy dogs, he turned a corner, crossed over a timber yard, passed under a low dilapidated arch, then through a door, and entered the private residence, the magnificent but secluded home of my beggarly-looking old friend, the well-to-do merchant in disguise.

Once under his own hospitable roof, I found that all incognito and reserve had very properly been left outside, and he invited me to make myself at home, lounge on his velvet and satin-covered lounges, feast my eyes upon the profusion of beautiful tapestry and costly scrolls and tablets which adorned the walls, puff smoke through the cool silver hubble-bubble, and drink his iced champagne. After my eyes had leisurely wandered over the superb adornments which only wealth could command and a woman's deft hands arrange, my eyes languidly rested upon the graceful form of a woman, worked on a large Japanese screen. The head rested against a blossoming fruit tree, and the strangely expressive eyes seemed fixed upon me.

While dreamily admiring the life-like depth and lustre of those eyes they suddenly moved. Then they disappeared, and, to my wonderment, the lifeless ones of the screen closed dimly over. Ever afterwards, however, I took a great interest in that piece of furniture, especially when the eyes moved. I was careful, you may be sure, not to evince any surprise or to exchange more

than a discreet glance or two, because old Liang* did not know how the screen worked; he was rather short sighted. Time passed and we became very intimate.

One dark night in midwinter, when the snow lay thick on the ground and the harbour was deserted, I was awakened from my sleep by the sound of distant firing which seemed to draw nearer. Then I could hear loud shouting and a beating of tom-toms. Thinking it was perhaps some "joss pidgin" or night procession, as the Chinese often have, I lay in bed dreamily listening.

My house was enclosed in a large tree-shaded courtyard, with only one entrance through a lodge-gate, where a watchman was stationed, and my "boys" slept on the opposite side of the enclosure. Suddenly I heard the lodge-gate hurriedly opened; it had very creaky hinges, and made a great noise. Then the front-door was unlatched and footsteps approached along the passage.

Jumping out of bed, I threw on my dressing-gown just as someone knocked sharply on my door. Asking who it was, and receiving no reply, I opened it.

I was never more surprised in my life. I was quite mute with astonishment, for in walked a decidedly pretty young lady, accompanied by her *amah*, or female attendant. You could see at a glance that there was no western blood coursing through her veins by the peculiar manner in which her long black hair was made up, gracefully combed down round the ears and gathered in a large round plait at the back of the head, and also by her pretty warm fox-lined velvet gown, with its broad bell-shaped sleeves and artistic embroidery, and her neat little black divided-skirt, with little natural feet, not the usual hoof-like "golden lilies," peeping out beneath.

Hurriedly opening a bundle the *amah* carried, they brought out a complete outfit of Chinese man's clothing, and while the young lady motioned me to at once dress myself in them, the attendant, who could speak a little "pidgin" English, told me that her mistress had come to save my life. There were two or three thousand murderous rebels—mutineers from the surrounding forts, and bad characters who had already massacred numbers of people—

* In China the surname always comes first and the Christian name last.

From a photograph by J. Craik, Herne-Bay.

Chas. J. Malcombe

close at hand. They would be at my house in a few minutes and would murder me. There was not a moment to be lost.

The awful din of firing and yelling was now growing dangerously near. I quickly attired myself in the disguise my rescuer had brought, and while doing so could not help admiring the pluck and courage of this noble young girl, who had risked her own life in coming out through the dark wintry night to save mine. Who she was puzzled me more and more, but I could see she was of good birth.

Snatching up my papers, diary, and cash-box, and stuffing a few articles of value in my pockets, I told them I was ready. The large fearless eyes of the young girl now lighted and flashed. She was ready, too, as she half drew a large clumsy-looking horse-pistol from her sleeve, and led the way. It was fortunately a pitch dark night and freezing cold, and the snow lay thick around. The lodge gate was half open, the watchman had gone, and we passed out unobserved. The uproar was now frightful, and several times we were nearly knocked down by unseen persons as we groped our way along.

I fully expected every moment that we should rush right into the midst of the murderous mob that seemed to be all around, as cries, yells, and shots came from every direction. But on we went, through intricate windings and turnings, and finally passed through a low arch. Then we entered old Liang Ah Tou's retreat, which was a very secluded one. The old man was absent in Shanghai, but his young daughter—the heroine of the screen—had bravely saved my life. She had saved it just in time, for I afterwards learned that shortly after I left my house the rebels broke in; and they regularly turned the place upside down.

The other European residents, who lived in a safer place, and further away from the town than I did, had a very narrow escape. As it was, they took to the Customs boats, but the rebels were intercepted by the Taotai and his troops, and were driven back inland where they committed awful depredations.

Shortly afterwards the mandarins found out that poor old Liang was well off; and the shameful money "squeezing" process they submitted him to, chiefly caused his death, at least, so I believe.

But I married his good and faithful daughter, and blessing us, he died peacefully and contentedly, knowing that through all the years of his prosperity he had eluded the crafty vigilance of these mandarins, and that his little Ah Ghan was safe and happy in the care of one whom he had learned to trust and honour with his friendship.

I may add that she has since proved herself to be one of the noblest and best of wives: a loyal companion, a cheerful helpmate and a most trusty adviser. As I write these lines, of which she is unconscious, she sits near me in the arm-chair, her deft little fingers making the most exquisite embroidery.

The screen, like the "old clock on the stairs," never would work again when the old man died. But, nevertheless, we kept it for years, until leaving for England, as a dear old cherished relic of bygone days.

CHEFOO, FROM THE EAST BEACH.

XIV.—ADVENTURE WITH SMUGGLERS.

THE Chinese are inveterate and accomplished smugglers. Opium is the chief contraband article smuggled in the south, and arms and sulphur in the north, where salt is very cheap, and therefore heavily taxed at the southern ports, to where it is carried and sold at a large profit by evading the duty. Large quantities of arms and other munitions of war are purchased by the powerful secret societies, even old muskets and primitive horse-pistols fetching a good price in the north. Consequently many of the captains and officers on coasting steamers there find it pays to invest in these enterprises, the compradore and tallymen being responsible for the outlay and delivery, and arranging all operations. Sometimes the whole crew, from captain to cook's boy, are "in the swim," especially on German steamers, where the officers usually receive very small salaries, signing on at home, and not receiving the usual China Coast stipend. Under the circumstances, they can hardly be blamed for trying to make a few extra dollars. In nine cases out of ten the captains and chief officers of coasting boats are paid to "not savee" anything about the "smuggle pidgin" that goes on aboard. All they have to do is to say nothing, be a little deaf and short-sighted at times, hospitably entertain the "Haikwan man," and merely pocket the 200 dollar note which is laid every month under their pillow or plate, as a "cumshaw" or present from the chief of the smuggling gang.

Some steamers come up from Swatow and Amoy to Chefoo,

Newchwang, and Tientsin with two or three hundred half-picul bags of sulphur secreted on board, perhaps in the fore-peak, which is then filled up with water which has all to be baled out before the sulphur can be got at. They even go to the trouble of hauling the whole of the cable out of the chain-lockers, stowing fifty or a hundred bags there, and coiling it all back again, and yet think nothing of the enormous trouble and fatigue providing they can ensure a fair chance of "running" free. Arms, cartridges, and dynamite are frequently concealed in sail-lockers, carefully rolled up in spare topsails, foresails, and staysails, which have to be taken out, untied, and unrolled before the goods can be got at. And then perhaps they are not there at all, but stowed away in the bunt of some sail on one of the masts, and, besides being hard to reach, are generally protected by the officers on deck, who can compel any one who unfurls those sails to furl them again, or pay the sailors to do so.

Having heard that no important seizures had been made by the Customs search parties for many years, and being confident, from what had come to my knowledge, that a vast amount of smuggling was actually being carried on with impunity, I inquired very fully into the matter. At that time I was constantly employed in the Returns Office, preparing reports and despatches, so had very little time for other work. I learned from some of the tidewaiters that a few small seizures had been made a month or two previous, but that lately nothing had apparently been "run." I thought differently, however.

One morning the Commissioner, when talking to me, said that he had heard from some high Chinese official that large quantities of arms and sulphur had been brought into the place and carried inland. It was a profitable venture, as sulphur fetches 8 taels per picul there, and can be bought in the south of China for less than half that price. I said to the Commissioner, who was a very energetic, hard-working man, that if he would put me off duty, and let me go about the business with an entirely free hand, I would undertake to unravel the mystery, if it were possible to do so, for the smugglers evidently landed the goods somewhere at no great distance; where, and how, remained to be

discovered. He consented, and I at once absented myself from indoor-staff work and made my plans.

It was probable that the things were landed by night in an out-of-the-way part, near some place of concealment, as smuggling munitions of war is a dangerous undertaking, for, according to Chinese law, it is punishable with death; consequently those who make it a business are generally lawless and desperate characters.

Next morning at sunrise I took a quiet walk by myself along the east cliffs. Climbing down among the rocks near the beach, I searched about for traces of sulphur, which are not easily obliterated, as water has little effect upon it. For two or three hours I climbed about over the scraggy rocks, peering into every nook and corner, and imagine my delight when suddenly I perceived the little yellow specks I was searching for. There they were, leading right up from the water's edge. I picked up some pieces nearly as large as a marble, and they led away along the narrow and rocky strip of beach for some distance and then up the jagged side of the cliff.

From rock to rock I clambered, gradually ascending higher and higher; and then the specks grew few and faint, and, branching off round the back of a huge boulder, led to what appeared to be the solid rock. Rolling a large stone aside, I found the narrow entrance to a small cave. My heart beat fast as I struck a match, and, first looking round to see if my movements were observed, crawled in.

By the aid of lighted matches I was able to make out three old square-shaped lanterns, and a few sacks, and abundant traces of sulphur; nothing else. This was a valuable discovery, however, and I now felt sure of ultimate success. Everything depended on my caution and prudence. Creeping out I carefully replaced the stone, and making my way along the rugged ledge, climbed to another higher one, and there, a little above, and overlooking the smugglers' cave, I found a deep cleft or cavity in the rock, sufficiently large to conceal a man. Here there were no traces of sulphur whatever, nor did the yellow specks lead in this direction; so, after minutely surveying the locality I determined to make this my hiding place, where I could lie low for the smugglers.

For several days, before commencing final operations, I visited the spot very early in the morning and late at night, when no one was about, for the sole purpose of making myself perfectly acquainted with every rock, crevice, path and ledge. So that in case of emergency I should not be placed at a disadvantage through ignorance of the locality.

At last I commenced in earnest, sleeping during the day and watching by night. About 11 p.m. I used to put on Chinese clothes and pigtail, and when properly disguised take my loaded revolver, secreted up my broad bellshaped sleeves, and set out for the smugglers' rendezvous, which was a long walk and a lonely dangerous place, especially in the dark.

For the first nine or ten days nothing occurred, nor did I see anything or anyone to excite suspicion; the place seemed quite deserted.

One night, however, just as the moon was beginning to faintly show its light through the gloom, and when I was lying down in my place of concealment, in a semi-conscious state of sleepiness, I was suddenly startled nearly out of my senses. The oppressive stillness was broken by the sharp sound of a displaced stone falling within a few yards of me.

Drawing back, and holding my breath in suspense, I grasped my revolver more tightly. Another stone rattled past quite close to my crevice, then I heard an audible whispering going on all around. Were they after me? That was the all-important question I inwardly asked myself.

A man now passed across the entrance. I could have touched his leg. Then another one; while several others made their way by another route down to the second ledge to the cave, where about eight of them assembled. Others were deployed at points of vantage to keep watch and give the alarm in case of a surprise.

I was never a very plucky fellow at the best of times, and when I saw the weapons these desperate-looking men carried, for each one was armed to the teeth, I was attacked with a horrible fit of nervous trembling, in fact,—

> "I felt my sinews slacken with the fright,
> And a cold sweat trill down o'er all my wits.
> As if I were dissolving into water."

That's how I felt. But as I had more than once, during my previous travels at sea and in Africa, been in some rather "tight" places, I managed, as I had accustomed myself, to overcome this indescribable feeling of fear. I munched a biscuit and took a stiff "peg" of brandy from my flask. These seemed to restore my nerves to a more normal state; but still I felt far from comfortable and secure.

They now lit one of the square lanterns, and a man waved it to and fro. This was evidently a signal, for on looking seaward, I descried another light, evidently shown from some fishing boat or junk; as steamers bound to more northern ports often came in near the bay during the night, and, without the least fear of detection, discharged a regular cargo of smuggled goods into a fishing boat or junk which was waiting for it. *

Having shown this light for some minutes, they all went down to the water's edge, and seating themselves among the rocks, lit their pipes and waited. I breathed a sigh of relief as they moved further away from me. In about half-an-hour's time I heard the sound of a *yuhloa* working; then it stopped, and someone hailed those ashore, before venturing in further. Passwords were exchanged, and a large square-shaped *sampan,* laden to the gunwales with sulphur, grated on the beach.

In a moment all was bustle, as each man swung a couple of half-picul bags on his shoulder and walked, with the sureness and agility of a goat, up the cliff. In a few minutes the *sampan* went away, soon returning with another larger cargo; but where they took it all to was yet to be found out. To ascertain this I should have been obliged to shift my position to the top of the cliff. But I dare not do so, because of the men on watch, who would have been almost sure to discover me and give the alarm, and that would have speedily and effectually sealed my fate. So I remained where I was, hardly daring to move a muscle

* This is repeatedly done by smugglers in Amoy, and junks from Singapore, partially laden with opium, come in to the adjacent islands or mainland, and discharge their valuable cargoes. I have there seen Customs launches inexplicably *detained* so long, though prepared, that the smuggled goods have been landed, the launch arriving too late. AUTHOR.

for fear of attracting attention, particularly as the moon was now getting high in the heavens.

There were three loads landed, altogether about 300 bags, roughly estimated as valuing 1,200 *Haikwan* Taels, equivalent to £ 300.

After all the bags had been safely carried away and evidently secreted somewhere in the vicinity, the men held a short consultation and dispersed. But, before the *sampan* left, a respectably dressed Chinaman, evidently one of the capitalists of the gang, handed a note or cheque to one of the sampan's crew, and they shoved off.

Soon all was oppressively silent again, and I breathed more freely and with a sense of great relief as I changed my cramped position. But I did not consider it prudent to venture out until daylight dawned.

The sky began to lighten at last; then, shaking myself free of the dust and stiffness I ate a couple of biscuits, finished the drop of brandy in my flask, and set about to trace the sulphur that had been spilt from some of the broken bags. But the greater portion of it had been carefully swept up and scattered, so as to hide all traces as much as possible; and nothing was noticeable to a casual passer. By bending down, however, and carefully scrutinising every foot of ground, I was able to follow the little specks which led in a zigzag way up the side of the cliff. Up I scrambled, determined to follow the scent up now it was so "warm." Fortunately no one was about at this early hour, so I was able to ferret away undisturbed.

On arriving at the top, I had no difficulty in following the carefully hidden traces, for the undisturbed marks of a hard broom led a little to the southward and then branched off at an angle to the left, finally passing under the closed lodge gate of a mansion tenanted by a widow lady, wife of a deceased American missionary, who was absent.

I at once concluded that the lodge-keeper was implicated in the smuggling; but as I had no wish to alarm him and thus perhaps frustrate my plans, I went back to the cleft, secreted my Chinese clothes, and strolled home.

After breakfast I went and saw the Commissioner. When I told him what I had found out he was very pleased and enthusiastic and promised to at once apply for a warrant from the American Consul to search the suspected premises. This he obtained, and at noon he and the Harbour Master, accompanied by several members of the Outdoor Staff, myself, and a number of Customs boatmen—altogether forming quite an imposing procession—started for the smugglers' repository.

On arriving there the Commissioner knocked loudly at the lodge-gate, which was opened by a smug-faced crafty-looking coolie, whom I could see at a glance was guilty. He koutowed, seemed very polite, and feigned innocent surprise, which was changed to pious indignation when he learned our mission.

The house, though furnished throughout, was closed, and had evidently been untenanted for some considerable time; as the dust lay thick in passage and room, and a mildewy smell pervaded the place.

While the Commissioner and his party went through the house I returned to the gate, and carefully followed up sulphur traces which led round to the rear of the house and into some bushes. Pushing these aside, and making my way through a thick and tangled growth of shrubs, I saw a small trap-door. Opening this, I found a narrow subterranean passage leading beneath the foundations of the building. I had discovered the smugglers' hoarding-place.

Hurrying back to the house, I brought the rest of the party round; and the Commissioner, who was very excited, at once arrested the gatekeeper, who fell on his knees and implored mercy. * A lantern was lit, and a tidewaiter and myself crawled in. After traversing this passage for some distance—it branched into several low cellars—and there lay tier upon tier of half-picul bags of sulphur. All this was removed to the Custom House and confiscated. We afterwards learned that had we discovered the place a few days sooner, we should have seized thousands of bags, nearly all of which had been removed by night to depôts further

* I afterwards heard that this unfortunate man suffered decapitation, by order of the Taotai, shortly after he was handed over to the Chinese authorities.

inland. And this had been going on uninterrupted for years, smuggler after smuggler having used these underground cellars, made his fortune, and retired.

One of these inland smuggling depôts, situated across the bay some miles to the westward, near an ancient factory, I was on the verge of discovering. But a despatch had been immediately sent to Sir Robert Hart, at Pekin, after the seizure, and I was now transferred on promotion to Amoy, having made a very good thing out of the find.

On July 4th, at 4.30, I left Chefoo in the s.s. "Haeting," after a short but pleasant stay of eight months there.

ODE TO CHEFOO.

s.s. "Haeting," July 4th, 1888.

Now as I gaze upon thy peaceful strand,
By fragrant airs of early summer fann'd,
Ling'ring I watch each twilight shade pourtray
The homely picture of a happy day
That now declines: but each receding scene
Will form the landscape of some future dream
Of perfect rest: and mem'ry will alight
On verdant ways, now fading, as the night
Steals gently forward, and the soft-toned breeze
Trips lightly homeward o'er the Eastern seas.

THE "THOUSAND ROCKS" TEMPLE. AMOY.

XV.—AMOY AND CHANGCHOW.

THE island of Haimun is one of the most important of the islands on the seaboard of the province of Fuhkien, or "Happy Establishment," as the province was denominated in place of its ancient one of Min, which is the name borne by a river that has its source in its boundaries. And Amoy, a walled city of the third degree of rank, is the capital, famed for its oysters and luscious pumeloes; and its exquisite rice-paper flowers and carved peachstone necklaces and bracelets. It is situated in lat. 29' 40' north, and long. 118 east, in the midst of a beautiful bay that is protected seaward by a chain of islands, the largest of which is Quemoy, or "The Golden Gate"; and at its south-western end is the mouth of the Lung Kang, or "Dragon" river, which runs in a westerly direction to the departmental city of Changchow (the Taitun of Marco Polo), which is about 36 miles from Amoy.

A visitor to the city of Changchow writes thus:—

"The approach to Changchow does not give much warning to the visitor of his being in the neighbourhood of a populous city. Almost the first intimation is the sight of a long high bridge crossing the river, with houses erected upon it. It is built on stone piles 25 in number, each 20 feet high and 20 feet apart. Large round beams of wood are laid from pile to pile, and smaller pieces across these, on which rests a brick and stone pavement. The workmanship is clumsy but massive, some of the stones used

in the pavement being 45 feet in length and two feet in breadth. The bridge is almost 10 feet in width, and about one half of its length on both sides is covered with shops. The usual landing place is just below the bridge. About a mile higher up the river is a second and similar bridge, and, just beyond this, a temple, which is reputed to be of great antiquity. It bears marks of extreme age in the decay everywhere visible, and is said to have been erected about A.D. 600 (time of the Sui Dynasty). In the central shrine are seven gigantic figures, flanked by 15 others of life size, at right angles on either side. To the right of the main building is another, containing an immense idol about 20ft. in height, carved out of solid granite.

"Some of the streets of Changchow are very wide, but the majority are as filthy and offensive as those of most Chinese towns. There are several good shops, and the markets are well supplied. At the northwest corner is another temple containing even more figures than that above mentioned. It contains a shrine dedicated to Chu-fu-tzu*, and a house, reputed to have been his, exists in the centre of the city, which is surrounded by a wall that nearly forms a square, its southern side following the curve of the river and, from the watch-towers that crown them, more than forty villages are visible."

Amoy is the safest and decidedly the most picturesque harbour in China; and, during the beautiful summer evenings, I used to take the four-oared gig and drift down with the tide to the outer harbour—there being an outer and inner one—enjoying the cool sea breeze and the wild romantic scenery. If the reader would like to catch a glimpse of this beautiful scene, he cannot do better than step into my boat and accompany me, in imagination, on one of these pleasant evening trips.

It is the close of bright day, and the soft rays of twilight, blending with the shades of approaching night, illume the western landscape, where the imposing heights of distant mountains loom up in solitary grandeur amidst the mellow shadows of departing day. With them they disappear in the fading light leaving but

* A very celebrated and prolific writer on Chinese classics.

WESTERN ENTRANCE TO "THOUSAND ROCKS" TEMPLE..

the nearer ranges, on the gloomy crest of which some few hoary trees at intervals rear themselves, like grim sign-boards on a deserted highway, and in some places gather together in exiled companionship, forming an avenue where only the soft airs of night whisper and sing, and where only the harsh winds of the tempest wail and complain in a lofty wilderness where the rude forefathers of bygone generations sleep side by side and at rest, and where the sun pityingly smiles its warmest smiles, and lingers in the evening, and below which the tired waves cast themselves upon the shore, and sing their old-world melodies for ever.

It is pleasant to drift down with the tide and to meet the lowly fishermen who from afar come gliding home over the rippling waters as the warm shades of evening flicker on their amber sails. All seems quiet and conducive to meditation. Such scenes as these can only be appreciated and traced out in the true beauty of nature by some Claude or Turner. But this may never be: such refined and poetic delineators are indeed rare. And yon ancient building to the eastward, nestling beneath the far-spreading foliage of old trees, with its gabled roof and well-worn steps, leading to the open door near which those poor Taouist priests are intoning some weird Gregorian chant at eventide, may never, in its sublimely-solemn decay, be painted as a quaint and seemly relic by an artist of our day, who perhaps might pass beneath the shadow of its lichened and rocky basement but never think of looking up to where the children stand on the broad terrace above, and lean over the moss-grown, crenelated balcony, in that dear old shady place, watching the great ships come and go.

Beyond this a small antiquated village, with its glimpses of fantastic architecture, gives a homely appearance to the peaceful scene. And anon the mirthful voices of young children strike pleasantly on the listening ear, while from among the little fleet of junks and *sampans* at anchor near the shore, you occasionally hear the familiar sound of a reed flute or catch a few notes of strange music leisurely drawn from an oddly-fashioned *pipa*, or lute by some youthful bard—some unknown Tartini or Corelli of this pagan land, who will sing his songs alone in the evenings on the water, dreaming his ambitious dreams of youth, and pass

away unheard of and unnoticed, and his rough urn * will be laid by among the rest that stand in the niches and crevices of yonder rocks which form a screen to the rustic village.

"Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year!"

We drift along, and now pass a quiet spot where some workmen are building a junk in a sequestered yard near the beach, where the friendly foliage of a broad-spreading tree covers the undeveloped form of that infant vessel which will soon sail out to sea, and be anxiously watched by the wives and lovers, who stand together on the sea-front walk every morning and evening, and—like the good people of our land—prayerfully mark the coming and going of the ships which bear their loved ones to and fro on the watery highway of toil and danger.

To the southward the Lam-ti-bu, or "Great Southern Warrior," rises up boldly and grandly—with its cloud-topped heights climbing heavenward. Quite close to the south-west of us, a few boat-lengths away, the small island of Kulangsoo, with its rock-girt shore, rises out of the sea; and among its grassy declivities, the

* The learned authors of "The Treaty Ports of China and Japan" chronicle the by no means surprising fact "that at the time of the occupation of the island of Amoy a number of stone jars were discovered stowed away in the recesses of the rocks, with luted covers. Upon examination they were found to contain perfect human skeletons, each bone carefully packed and numbered, or marked with red paint." These "jars" or urns are quite common, and may often be seen in the clefts and ledges of rocks in the provinces of Kwangtung and Fukhien, for it is customary, in these districts, after a person has been buried ten years, for one of the male members of the family to remove the bones from the coffin and deposit them in one of these urns, carefully marking each bone for correct replacement. There they remain until a new coffin is ready and a propitious day for re-interment found, when they are again laid out in the coffin and re-buried. The bones are always marked in some manner, as the Chinese believe that if they are not replaced correctly the body will, at the day of resurrection, be deformed. If there are no male heirs, or male relations sufficiently interested and respectful to perform this office, or if the family is too poor to afford the expenses of re-interment, the bones are left in these quaint receptacles mentioned by the said learned authors.

ANOTHER VIEW OF "THOUSAND ROCKS" TEMPLE.

palatial abodes of Government representatives and wealthy merchants rise up proudly, with their balconies, arched colonnades, and Tuscan columns—reminding one of Florence—towering above huge erratic boulders, scattered there during some remote glacial period, or when the all-powerful earthquake cast up and split asunder those small darkening islands to the south-east, where beacon lights are commencing to glimmer across the expanse of calm shadowy waters, as a warning and a mark to our navigators who now come and go past those dangerous barriers, by night and day, in enterprising constancy.

As we now pull homeward near the shore, the sweet smell of old timber and fruitful land reminds us of the well-remembered pastoral scenes of Western civilization. I wonder how long yonder gaunt old junk has been trading between the tropic shores of India and China? Many a year, I should imagine, by its venerable aspect, for tufts of grass are now growing through chinks in the high bulwarks; and the stout Namoa masts, from which those fast-rotting grassropes are trained, are of a russet hue, that only age can colour so effectively.

That white-bearded mariner sitting up there, near where the watch-lamp stands, seems, by his resigned look and contemplative mood, to think that his final voyage and last watch are likewise nearly over. But he will never forsake the old craft which has carried him safely for many and many a year in calm and storm, and is now again bearing him slowly outward to some other shore.

There is a grateful air of respectable age and decay about this place which, on the going down of the sun, reminds one how old is the world, how short is the day of our life, and how soon the golden shadows of the evening will close in on our frail bark, as we drift down the last length of the great River of Years, and with the ebb tide of night float out on the bosom of eternity.

"I love thee, twilight! As thy shadows roll,
The calm of evening steals upon my soul;
Sublimely tender, solemnly serene;
Still as the hour, enchanting as the scene.
I love thee, twilight! For thy gleams impart

Their dear, their dying influence to my heart,
When o'er the harp of thought thy passing wind
Awakens all the music of the mind,
And joy, and sorrow, as the spirit burns;
And hope and mem'ry sweep the chord by turns."

One evening, shortly after my arrival in Amoy, I saw a venerable Chinese gentleman, with head bowed, and hair white and silvery, walk down to the end of the Customs jetty, and look wistfully towards the few junks in harbour, and then out to the distant sea.

There was an air of time-hallowed gentility about this old man, not only in his aged form and features, but also in the faded colour of his threadbare blue silk gown which blended gratefully with the solemn yet majestic air of respectable decay that characterised his surroundings.

As his eyes attentively scanned each distant sail, and the outline of each hull, a kindly ray of hope seemed to settle for a while upon his face. But, as his keen eyes lastly appeared to seek some other object which was not yet in sight, that bright ray flitted away as gently as it came, being gradually replaced by an expression of calm resignation. At last, with a gentle sigh, he turned away to retrace his footsteps, and was lost to my sight.

I saw him come there again next evening, and on making inquiries I learned that he always came there alone every morning and evening to see whether two junks, once owned by himself and commanded by his two only sons, had arrived or were in sight. These two junks, it appeared, had sailed away from Amoy, bound to Takow, in the neighbouring island of Formosa, some fifteen or more years ago, but had never returned, nor had they been heard of again.

Yet the old man still watched for them and wondered when they would come. He never told his sorrow: in fact, he spoke to no one, and no one spoke to him. They said he was out of his mind. But there was something so pathetic about his quiet and uncomplaining loneliness and hopeful sorrow in old age, that my heart went out to him in pity and respect. I dare say, could we instantaneously transfer ourselves to China, and this

THE " FAIRY'S FOOT TEMPLE " AMOY.

evening stand on the Customs Jetty at Amoy, at about six o'clock we should see the same old gentleman come there and look wistfully out to sea for the two junks that will never return.

In the seventeenth century, Amoy, and the island of Formosa, which we shall visit later on, were in the possession of the much-feared and celebrated pirate, Koxinga, who organized very powerful gangs of banditti on shore, and a strong piratical fleet, with which he swept the China Seas, striking terror and dismay into the hearts of civilian and official alike, the whole of the Fuhkien province at one time paying tribute to him.

In different places, both in Amoy and Kulangsoo, are yet to be seen the ruined watch-towers, forts, and entrenchments of this noted rebel chief, whose tomb stands about a mile to the southward of Amoy, at the side of a road leading to the village of Amkang. It is a magnificent structure, comprising two granite figures of colossal size, nearly 10ft. in height and 3ft in breadth across the shoulders. There is also a well-sculptured horse, richly caparisoned, but in some parts chipped and much mutilated—which is supposed to represent the charger once ridden by the occupant of the tomb.

There are many interesting spots worthy of a visit, and a climb up to the "Thousand Rocks," "Rocking Stone," and "Fairy's Foot" temples well repays the artistically-inclined rambler. A favourite excursion among Amoy residents is to Pagoda Island, named from an ancient pagoda there, used as a beacon by junks—which is situated on the Changchow river, where some good shooting and fishing can be enjoyed by those fond of sport. And the archæologist will find that the country round about Amoy is very interesting—not only for its wild mountain scenery, but for its ancient relics of bygone dynasties, which peep out from the hoary background of remote antiquity, and please the imagination with suggestive outlines of past glory.

XVI.—THE SERPENT'S BREATH.*

AMONG the large number of foreigners in China very few, except some of the "old hands," have experienced the discomforts and dangers which one may expect to encounter on the China coast, while voyaging in a junk. Therefore, perhaps it would interest the reader were I to narrate some incidents connected with a passage I made in one of these unwieldy-looking vessels, that exactly resemble in rig, build, and accommodation, those seen by the ancient mariners of Marcus Antoninus, nearly 2,000 years ago.

During my residence in Amoy, I frequently went up country on shooting expeditions, sometimes accompanied by friends, but more often alone. I had shot all over the neighbourhood of Amoy within a radius of sixty miles, and at last determined to seek other hunting grounds less frequented by foreigners; and so consulted the old *lowdah* of the Customs house-boat, who was an acknowledged authority on these matters. He had frequently acted as my guide on similar excursions, besides being a keen sportsman himself, and a dangerous one too, when equipped for the chase with an awful and ancient weapon which was a cross between a blunderbuss and a gingall. He told me of a place on the mainland, near his native village—some seventy miles up the coast, between Foochow and Amoy—where game was plentiful, and sportsmen rare. I determined to try my luck there, and at once made preparations for a couple of weeks' outing. It was not safe to

* "The Serpent's Breath" originally appeared in the columns of the London *Globe*, December 12th, 1894.

venture out on the open sea in a house-boat, and no coasting steamers went near there, so there was no alternative but to scramble over steep and rugged tiers of hills and barren mountains or go by junk. I chose the latter course. My "boy," Ah Chut—who always remained at home to look after the house and the welfare of his numerous friends, whom he often entertained at my expense—seemed equally anxious that I should dispose of myself in this manner; and the same evening he gravely introduced to me a rakish-looking old villain, an uncle or fourth cousin of his, whom he modestly described as a "large hearted and very square captain" of a "number one" trading junk that would sail on the morrow for Foochow, with a cargo of pumeloes and earthenware. The said "large-hearted and very square captain" would graciously undertake to put in and land me at my destination for the small sum of twenty dollars—which, after three hours' haggling, he reduced to ten. Of course I had to make the best of a bad bargain, out of which the faithful Ah Chut no doubt got a good commission. I found my own "chow," which consisted of tinned meats, several pounds of biscuits, and a few bottles of "Old Smuggler," with which I usually fortified myself against all sea maladies. These are likely to be particularly malicious when one is placed at the mercy of the waves in such a strangely fashioned craft as a junk, whose hull is supposed to represent a sea monster—the high stern for its uplifted tail, the eyed-bows for its head, and the stayless masts and sails for the fins, and whose cabins look more like niches in a sepulchre than accommodation for human beings.

Next morning I arose early. On looking out of my window, which faced the harbour, I noticed that some of the sailors on the "numba one" junk were already hauling in the grass-rope cable, ready to "cat" the wooden anchor, while others hoisted and wetted the huge lateen mat sails, and made other preparations to leave with the flood tide.

I hurried on my clothes, snatched a hasty breakfast, bade adieu to my little wife, who seemed very anxious, and to the smiling-faced Ah Chut, and, on arriving on board, received a hearty and obsequious welcome from the "large-hearted" captain. After

having, with well-feigned reluctance and much *kowtowing*, secured my passage-money, he ushered me through a little door into a small odorous niche in the stern, which smelt of cockroaches, opium, and incense, but which he nevertheless extolled as the most comfortable state-room in the ship.

I groped about this hole until I found my gear, which Ah Chut had carefully deposited under a coil of rotten rope that had been coiled round in the form of a cradle that I might sleep there. I set about to make the den as habitable as possible, and had just completed my arrangements when the loud beating of a large gong on deck made me aware that we were under way. I crept out on deck, where all was noise and confusion. The captain was cursing vigorously, expectorating indiscriminately, yelling various orders, and working the tiller ropes, and the others were following his example. One old mariner stood aft near the stern-lamp, beating the gong and firing off crackers to propitiate "joss," the gong-beating being responded to by other junks which we passed on our way down the harbour, and altogether they made a most infernal din, which only the Chinese know how to make.

It was fine bracing weather, and, as the haze lifted, a wild and picturesque panorama was unfolded to the gaze; range upon range of lofty mountains looming up in various shapes until lost in the blue distance, mingling with the clouds, and forming an imposing background, enhanced the beauty of the ever-changing scene.

A gentle north-easterly wind now sprang up, and soon carried us out of the harbour and clear of the land, although we kept it in sight throughout the day, during which we were favoured with a steady breeze and smooth sea. Towards evening, however, the wind fell light, as it generally does on that coast, and the heavy mat sails began to flap idly against the tall masts, that creaked incessantly as the vessel lazily rolled to the gentle swell. At five o'clock the crew sat down on the deck in a group, and partook of their evening meal, or supper, which consisted of boiled rice, salt fish, and garlic, flavoured with common white *samshoo*. They all seemed happy and contented with their humble lot, and much merriment, tinctured with some very ribald jokes—

some at my expense—passed between them while they deftly manipulated their "chop-sticks" with voracious appetite.

I was leaning against the rail aft and admiring the rustic group of motley rovers, upon whose sun-tanned faces the dying rays of the fast-setting sun were playing, when suddenly one of them started up, and, pointing seaward, cried, "*Gwei chwan! gwei chwan!*" (Devil junk, or phantom junk, in the Amoy dialect.)

All hands excitedly crowded to the bulwarks, eagerly gazing in the direction indicated. At some distance away to the eastward a dismasted and apparently deserted junk was drifting on the lonely waste of calm waters, and looked grim and uncanny standing out against the uncertain light, between the dark shadowy sea and the sky.

Somehow this derelict seemed to be approaching us rapidly, probably because the tide was setting our way, landward, and our sails kept us from drifting so fast.

A panic now seized all hands except the skipper, who swore right lustily and gave strict orders to beat the big gong and fire off crackers, which the crew did with a will, while some of them, being fearful lest the "devil junk" should, in spite of the awe-inspiring noise, draw nearer, put out a large oar over the stern and *yuhloed* for dear life. But it was hard work to propel such a box-bowed craft as ours through the water; and to the consternation of all, the wreck gradually approached nearer.

I am not usually superstitious or unnecessarily nervous, but I really began to feel most uncomfortable, and imagined all kinds of unpleasant things—pirates being uppermost in my mind. So, for company's sake, I drew near the "large-hearted and very square captain," and, with a bold smile of feigned indifference, asked him why he did not board the castaway junk?

"Haiya!" he exclaimed, with a shudder at the bare idea of such a thing. "Why that's the phantom Foochow junk; would you have us all killed by the serpent's breath?"

"It's bad enough as it is," he continued; "we are too near now to escape the ill-luck that awaits us. Calm now—yes—hold on, though, we may be clinging to——."

The rest of the sentence was lost in a terrible discharge

of oaths and firecrackers, which nearly blew the stern away.

Strange to say, his predictions came true. Hardly had the noise and smoke of the aforesaid oaths and crackers died away than we lost sight of the derelict in the gloom, and a sudden gust of wind whistled through the ropes, threw us aback, and then died away with a mournful whine, and was soon succeeded by another longer and fiercer squall, which rudely ruffled the calm surface of the sea and then rippled away again. And before another anxious hour had passed, a fierce "north-easter" broke upon us in all its fury. Over went the tiller—and away we scudded.

"Where are we bound to now?" I yelled out to the skipper, who, with three others, was steering the much-strained vessel, that rolled and plunged in a desperate manner.

"Back! back, if we can! The fates are against us!" he cried, And away we went, an awful sight to see.

I had experienced and heard quite enough for one night, and now sought the friendly shelter of my little niche, where, to my surprise, I found the rest of the crew, who, by the dim light of a smoking slush-lamp, were huddled together on the deck munching my biscuits, smoking, and conversing in ominous whispers. I freely forgave their unlawful appetite, and felt really glad of their company; and, to enliven things a little, I produced my case of whisky, which was received with grunts of approval. I squatted down on the deck beside an old fossil named Po-leung Chop, who was called the father of the crew, and who was grumbling about "the serpent's breath," of which I had already heard sufficient to excite my curiosity. So when we had regaled ourselves from my whisky, and had sent the "large-hearted" captain up a "peg", I proposed that old Chop should relate all he knew about this dreaded monster. This proposal was seconded and approved by unanimous grunts; and the venerable man, taking a preliminary "pull" at the whisky, and wiping his mouth on the back of his horny hand, commenced his yarn, which I will endeavour to briefly recount.

"Some twenty or more years ago I was captain of a large Foochow junk, trading between that port, Amoy, and Swatow,

and sometimes making profitable trips over to Formosa in the tea season. On my last voyage in her, we were lying in Foochow, and loading a valuable cargo for Swatow, when a party of tiger-catchers came aboard as passengers, bringing with them a huge cage, in which was a monstrous snake with two large horns, which had been captured in the tiger-trap. Hoping to find a market for it further south, they carried it with them alive.

"I at first refused to take the devilish reptile aboard, but they eventually overcame my scruples, with a present of six-thousand cash, and promises that I should share the money they hoped to realise by its sale. So at last I consented, and had the cage securely fastened abaft the main hatch. This was the worst piece of work I ever did in my life, and was the cause of great misfortunes that have dogged me like wolves ever since—devouring all good luck that comes in my way. Having taken in a full cargo and a number of passengers, I consulted an astrologer, who—curses be on his head—found me a sailing day favourable to the *Fengshui*,* and I left at the precise time indicated by him, which fell on the 13th day of the sixth moon of the year 1867.

"All misgivings that I first entertained, through the serpent being aboard, were soon dispelled by the fine weather and fair breeze which favoured us at the commencement of the passage; and for the first four days all went well and happily. On the evening of the fifth day, however, the wind suddenly fell light; dark clouds gathered around us, and there was every appearance of an approaching storm. I called the hands and shortened sail, and, altering our course, stood in closer to the land, under the lee of which there would be good shelter in case the wind blew, as I expected it would, from the westward. I was not mistaken, for suddenly a heavy squall from that direction struck the old junk, and was accompanied by heavy rain, thunder, and lightning. Some of the half-lowered sails were blown to pieces, the vessel heeled over almost on her beam-ends, and in the midst of the confusion that ensued one of the men rushed up and told me that the serpent's cage had been rent asunder, and the monster had escaped into the hold, which was full of rice that chiefly constituted our cargo.

* Wind and water influences.

For some time I was unable to take any steps to secure it, as my junk was in imminent danger of being lost; but when the wind moderated a little, and everything had been made snug, I had the hatch opened, but could see nothing of the serpent. I was bound to deliver my cargo in good condition, as it was consigned to a high official in the Taotai's Yâmen at Swatow, and the awful monster would make irreparable havoc if allowed to remain there. As nobody would venture near the hatchway, I offered five thousand cash to whoever would go down and kill it. At length, tempted by the large reward, two of the strongest men among the crew armed themselves with swords and cautiously descended into the hold.

"They had no sooner got down than the terrible monster approached them, and, raising its head, hissed loudly, ejecting a vapour from its mouth. The two brave men fell dead. Then it raised its horned head, with great glaring eyes, above the hatch, and began to come up on deck to make an end of us all. But we did not wait to see what it would do. Launching the two *sampans* that were forward, we all abandoned the junk, which is still drifting about on this coast; and may the gods protect any unfortunate men who attempt to board it." *

This concluded the yarn, which had taken old Chop so long to recount that all the others except myself had fallen asleep. On creeping out on deck, I found that the junk had made such good way before the gale that we were already safely back again in the outer harbour of Amoy. The "great-hearted and very square captain" was still at the tiller-ropes, and I certainly gave him the credit of handling the old tub remarkably well, and freely forgave him his many sins, and the loss of my passage money and anticipated sport, for landing me safely at home again.

* This story is universally credited on the seaboard of Fuhkien. So great is their superstitious fear of the "serpent's breath" that no one will ever board or even go near a castaway Foochow junk, which is supposed to haunt that coast, like the "Flying Dutchman" does the Cape.

XVII.—YUN LIP AND HIS FORTUNE.

AMOY has been noted ever since A.D. 700 for wealthy, and enterprising traders, whose connections even then extended to the ports of the Archipelago and India, and even to Persia. One of my best and most respected friends in China is Mr. Yun Lip,* an Amoy man, late chief compradore in a large tea hong, who recently acquired a blue mandarin button, and now lives the congenial life of a retired city gentleman in a comfortable residence on the outskirts of Amoy, surrounded by all the Oriental luxuries, not forgetting among them four nice little, small-footed wives and half-a-dozen promising young "Celestials," calculated to cheer, and so dear to the heart of a true Chinaman. For Yun Lip is all that, in spite of his long intercourse with foreigners: and he implicitly believes in his "joss pidgin," as all good heathens† should. I always, found him to be a thoroughly solid man of business, and an equally solid friend, from whose friendship I have derived considerable benefit and much pleasure; and I fully believe that my esteem for him is in every way reciprocated. I am glad that such is the case, for Yun Lip is a "man of parts," sterling to the backbone, and socially and morally far above the average Chinaman; and also physically, for he stands quite 6ft. in his socks, and is built in proportion.

He is certainly a fine man to look at—a great man, in fact!—but as harmless as a kitten, except in business transactions—there

* For obvious reasons I have not given this gentleman's real name—Yun Lip being merely a cognomen.

† See my closing remarks in Chapter XXX.

his inherent strength predominates, and he will surely worst you in a fair financial encounter. But in feats of love or war he is a genuine unsophisticated ass, easily captivated and led astray by a nice little hand or two little wee hoofs—"golden lilies," I should say—or an almond eye: fatal charms which he cannot resist. But, should an angry lover assert himself or turn up suddenly to seek redress or revenge, Yun Lip gives him precedence at once, and if necessary "makes tracks" with commendable dispatch. He never asks embarrassing questions or disputes such sacred property: he is too chivalrous for that, and considers prudence infinitely better than a thrashing, especially since he fights very badly and runs fairly well.

He says—or, at least, used to say—that he has never been accustomed to do things by halves, and if he fought, he should like to fight thoroughly; but having the will, but not the scientific skill so essential in preserving a "clean face" in these contests, he leaves such undignified work for fitter fists than his, and trusts to the swiftness of his legs to carry him through. I always admired his philosophy and his good-natured, jocular ways.

During the first few months of my intimacy with him he was very reticent concerning his past life, about which I knew comparatively nothing, nor did I make any inquiries, as it was no business of mine, and could not have made any difference in our friendship. One day, however, when we had just returned from a pleasant walk which we had wiled away in a more confidential manner than usual, dwelling chiefly upon our friendship, he said, when parting, "I want you to come round to my house after dinner, and spend a quiet evening with me: there are certain things which I should like to tell you."

After dinner I lit a cigar, and made my way through the narrow streets and lanes that had to be traversed before I could reach my friend's house, which, like himself, was thoroughly Chinese, the grotesque though artistic tracing of the stained glass windows, the curved and embellished lintel of the door, and the fantastically figured roof, being unmistakably so. The inside of the house, with its handsome though frigid-looking furniture,

inlaid with marble, was equally significant of the tenant's nationality and creed.

When visiting Chinese, I have always made a point of strictly observing their elaborate and punctilious rules of etiquette and their peculiarities; and on this occasion I tendered to the servant in place of my own modest and diminutive white card, a large red paper one with my name inscribed in Chinese characters. On being announced, Yun Lip at once came out and greeted me in his polite and cordial manner, conducting me to his reception-room, which, unlike the other rooms of the house, was comfortably furnished in European style. Being rather a cold night, there was a fire burning in the round stove, and Yun Lip drew two easy chairs up, and we made ourselves comfortable; and, to add to our comfort, he ordered some hot grog to which he was particularly partial. Having satisfactorily settled ourselves down for a comfortable evening I was ready to listen attentively.

"We have known each other a long time, now, and I dare say you have noticed how silent I have always kept about my early life." he commenced, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, and regarding the ruddy stove. "This I can truthfully say, however, my fortune has been made honestly and honourably; more so, perhaps, than the money of most men. I have known what poverty is; I have suffered its many stages, and have explored its vast possessions, and am not altogether fond of dwelling upon those never-to-be-forgotten experiences. I am proud, though, of the long struggle I maintained and the victory I won after so much fatigue and against such overwhelming odds. Through the gods having favoured me—and through my dogged determination to climb or scramble over every obstacle that presented itself, I have succeeded!"

"To what do you chiefly attribute your success?" I asked.

"In the first place, as I said, to the gods who favoured me. Secondly, to the loving care and patient but rigorous training of my dear mother, and partly to my inherent love of independence and contempt of all servitude. Consequently what would have ruined most boys made me. I have always been my own master—formerly poor, latterly rich, but always unfettered, except by the ties of love and friendship.

"I have but an indistinct remembrance of my childhood days, brightened at long intervals by little rays of sunshine or pleasure when the monotony of my humble life was broken by some childish pleasure or attracted by some gay procession or charitable entertainment. I remember my home, a small cottage or hut by the wayside; and my dear mother, a feeble, age-worn woman, frugal and industrious, very poor, but always loving and sincere. She had seen brighter, and better days, had enjoyed prosperity, and patiently endured reverses and poverty. She had received in her early days a careful education, and did her best to impart her knowledge to me; and, as I was fond of learning, she encouraged my studious inclination.

"At an early age I became very domesticated and thrifty, as I helped mother, who instilled upon my young, susceptible mind the value of money and its equivalent in commodities—one cent, judiciously invested, being better than one dollar ordinarily expended. I must have been about ten years old when she died, leaving me alone and penniless to shape my own course for good or evil. She had been unwell for some days, when one morning, after having eaten a little congee, she seemed to fall asleep. I went out with my small basket to gather some sticks for firewood, as we could not afford charcoal, and on my return found her, as I thought, still asleep, and in the same position.

"On placing my cheek against her wrinkled brow, I learned the awful truth. It was so cold that I became frightened, and, running out, called in our two neighbours. They only came and shook their heads, and then went out again. Words can ill express the utter loneliness and sense of desolation which now oppressed me. I would have given my little all to have been able to keep my poor mother's cold inanimate body with me for companionship. It was a foolish fancy, one that I knew could not be gratified; and it was with indeed heavy steps and heavier heart that I went out to consult an astrologer on the matter, and make arrangements for her burial.

"I determined to give her a fitting funeral, but all she had left as my inheritance was a sum of eighty dollars, some few cents and cash, a small box of clothing, which I have still; some

cooking and eating utensils, four wall-scrolls, and an old armorial tablet that had been handed down from generation to generation, and which is still in my possession. I prize it above all other belongings as a sacred relic, for my dear mother was proud of her ancestry, and so am I, more especially as I have had the honour and felicity of redeeming their fallen fortunes and renovating the long-neglected tombs of a noble but afflicted family."

"But how did you commence to make money?" I asked.

"You will be surprised to hear that the foundation of my fortune was a dust heap, and my first stock-in-trade was an empty biscuit-tin in fairly good preservation. As I said before, I was determined to give my honoured mother a funeral befitting her true rank and benevolence. I was unable to do this, but managed, however, by selling everything I possessed and spending every cent of her little hoard, to bury her comfortably and very decently.

"I was then left homeless, friendless, and without a cent. For three whole days and nights after her burial I never left her grave. It was summer-time, so the nights were warm, and I slept beside it, for all I ever cared for slept in that narrow bed beneath; and I did not feel quite so lonely and deserted when there; it was company for me. At last, however, I felt so weary and famished, from sorrow and want of proper nourishment, that I determined to try and obtain food somewhere.

"My mother lived and was buried on the other side of the harbour, at Kulangsoo; and at some distance from her ancestral tomb there was a large dust heap, where the servants of some foreign residents threw all kinds of refuse in the morning. I was walking away when an empty biscuit tin attracted my attention. Picking it out of the dustheap I washed it clean and bright in a little stream that ran near, and then started for the town. On my way along the road I was overtaken by a rough-looking coolie, who was carrying two round baskets on a bamboo. I noticed that in one of these were a number of corks, old tins, bits of scrap-iron, empty bottles, and bones, and a various assortment of garbage, and in the other a miscellaneous collection of dilapidated hats, greasy coats, old boots and shoes, and other articles of commerce. So I came to the conclusion that those

things had a market value, and that he was a kind of trader; he evidently exchanged his old hats and greasy coats in the one basket for the empty bottles and tins in the other, which he sold for hard cash.

"Have you had rice?" he asked in a jocular manner, as he came up with me, walking by my side with a swinging gait. Then, regarding my biscuit tin with a critical eye, he casually inquired, 'Where is your quarry?'

"I divined his meaning at once, but wisely evaded the question by saying that I wanted the tin for a purpose, but was not in his line of business, which was perfectly true. But in the event of my commencing, I knew that my secluded 'quarry' was an unworked one, and likely to yield considerable profit if properly manipulated. We soon parted company, and, after walking some distance, I espied a small tinsmith's shop at the corner of an alleyway. Behind the chip-strewn counter was an elderly man seated on a stool, cutting pieces of tin into various shapes, which he then transferred to an untidy-looking youth sitting before a furnace. He in turn deftly turned the flat pieces into various articles such as slush-lamps, pannikins, reflectors, strainers, boxes, and pots, which he then soldered up and placed on a well-filled shelf, for the inspection of intending purchasers.

"I offered my biscuit-tin for sale. Whereupon the venerable proprietor picked it up in a depreciatory manner and proceeded to point out its numerous defects, but none of its virtues, finally offering me one cent for it. I knew that if he offered me one cent it was sure to be worth two, so I held out for more; and, after much haggling, during which we both lost temper, he threw down two cents. I was about to depart when he called me back, and giving me five more cash, asked me to bring any other tins I might find to his establishment, and he would guarantee me fair prices.

"To this I consented, and pocketing the two cent pieces and five cash, went on my way, well satisfied with my first business transaction. My dear mother had always instilled upon my mind the important principles of economy; and I determined to practically adopt her adage: '*However large or however small your*

means may be, never spend more than half.' So I carefully wrapped one cent and three cash in a piece of linen and deposited them at the bottom of my pocket, which I carefully examined to see if there were any holes in it; the remainder I could spend on food. Very common rice cost 2½ cents a *catty*,* and the best from 3½ to 4 cents—so I did not invest in so much, but sought a wayside stall, where I enjoyed my first solitary meal, which consisted of a small sweet flour-cake that cost three cash, and a basin of warm congee for the same amount, so that I still had six cash for my evening meal.

"I walked along thoughtfully, though aimlessly, through the town, and was meditating upon my hard lot, when suddenly something whizzed past my head and dropped at my feet. It was only an old basket which somebody had thrown out of a window. I picked it up, and a thought at once struck me. I would try and find some of the articles I had seen in the basket of the man I had met that morning. I wandered on, and in front of a common sailors' 'rum-mill' found a number of good corks which had just been swept out into the gutter. Presently I found an old butter tin, then a milk tin, and before half the day was over I had accumulated quite a stock of saleable rubbish. During my ramble I met numbers of homeless individuals like myself, living on their wits, or on what other people threw away. From them I learned many useful and invaluable wrinkles, one of which was to negotiate pawn-tickets; but I was not able to do this until I had a little capital. One buys the ticket for a mere song, redeems the article pawned, keeps it, keeps an eye on its original owner, and at the New Year, when he is almost sure to have a little money, resell the article to him at a handsome profit.

"One old fellow I met spent the whole of the day looking for cigar-ends. I determined to find out what he did with them, and for this purpose endeavoured to engage him in conversation, but he was too wary. I had to resort to stratagem to gain my end, and followed him for fully three hours, got a free passage and crossed over to Amoy in the same sampan with him, keeping near him until he entered a large tobacconist's shop. I dare not

* One *catty* is equivalent to one pound and a quarter avoirdupois.

follow him further, but resolved to find some cigar ends and try my luck there.

"Being naturally rather a sharp lad, I reasoned with myself that it was only wasting good time to walk about in the gutters on the chance of finding a few stray 'ends,' and finally hit upon a plan which I put into execution before returning home—at least, to my mother's grave; that was my only home then. After the English Club at Kulangsoo had been closed at midnight, I quietly went on the broad verandah, and there found fully three catties weight of cigar-ends of the best quality. These I carefully wrapped up, and then, as the clock struck one, started for home. I was too poor to afford joss-sticks to burn at my mother's grave, so on my way through the town I picked out from various doorways the half-burned joss-sticks, some being only a little used.

"Next morning I crossed over to the Amoy side, and when the foreign hongs were swept out, I picked from the dust and refuse quite a number of cigar-ends. These, added to my others, I sold at a good price to the proprietor of the large tobacconist's shop, who had them made into cheap cigarettes and cigars for coolies. From that time forth I became a regular customer of his. I soon found by experience that even broken glass fetched at a certain place from eight to ten cash a catty, old bones from seven to ten cash, corks one cash each, spirit bottles two cents each, milk tins one cash, butter tins from four to six cash, empty cigar boxes eight cash, old newspapers three cents a catty, and kerosine tins—rare finds—ten cents each.

"It would not interest you, however," he concluded, "to relate the gradual day-by-day progress I made as an itinerant trader, that first day being the commencement of many similar ones, and the stepping-stone to years of frugal toil and drudgery. When I had saved a few dollars I went to Hong Kong and bought a couple of secondhand *rickshas*, which I painted and patched up like new, and loaned out to two coolies; then I bought more; afterwards a sampan, and finally a small trading junk. At the same time I bought the junk I opened a pawnshop in the Holy-

wood Road, in Hong Kong. When I had established a good business there I left it in charge of a trustworthy relation, and returned here to Amoy, where I opened another shop and did well. And now, dear friend, as you know, I own a fleet of junks and several pawn-shops, besides having good capital well invested in large and prosperous shipping firms. Now let us have a 'night-cap,' as you foreigners call it."

So I drank to Yun Lip and his fortune, and then went home, a wiser and even a better man.

Another very dear friend of mine in Amoy is Mr. John U (or Yu), a noble young Christian who, when I first met him was a student in Foochow College. During his holidays he often came of an evening, with several other young native students, to my house, where we held literary and debating meetings. I was often charmed and impressed with the brilliant attainments and refined wit and culture of my enthusiastic guests.

Mr. U, with whom I still correspond, on leaving college obtained employment as a chemist's assistant, afterwards joining the Imperial Maritime Customs as an indoor clerk, where he still remains, making good progress. Owing to the recent death of his elder brother, the care and maintenance of his beloved family has entirely devolved upon him; and a better and more dutiful son, and a more faithful young Christian worker could hardly be found. His younger brother, now a medical student in the Hong Kong Alice Memorial Hospital, is the same; and I take this opportunity of wishing them both a good and prosperous life, blessed with old age and peaceful retirement, enhanced by the pleasing reminiscences of a well-spent life.

XVIII—AMOY AND "NAMOA" PIRATES.

PIRACY among native craft, is yet rife in China, and during the time I was there the coast of Fuhkien was noted for piratical outrages. It was reported in the latter end of 1890 that quite a fleet of piratical junks were cruising off Foochow, and several trading vessels were boarded and looted near there.

In the month of August, 1890, three traders left Chiangchow, near Amoy, in a small junk, for the purpose of buying some pigs at a place called Hing Gwa, which is a journey of two or three days. Everything went well, and wind and weather proved favourable until passing the island of Mechew. Here early one evening they were attacked and boarded by armed pirates, who took possession of the junk, killing one man and driving two overboard. The two survivors who owned the craft pleaded hard for their lives, which, strange, to say, were spared by the pirates who—intending that they should be accorded the privilege of dying by starvation—left them on a very small out-of-the-way island, thinking, no doubt, that in a couple of days they would succumb to privation and exposure.

This was not their fate, however, for on the second or third day of their confinement a stray fishing boat, returning to Amoy, happened to see these unfortunate men and brought them back there. On their arrival they went to the Taotai, who immediately despatched the Chinese gun-boat "Hu-po" in search of the desperadoes, and the two survivors went out in her to aid the

EXECUTION OF "NAMOA" PIRATES.

captain in finding the scene of the outrage and detecting their own junk or the piratical one. Every effort was made and all vigilance exercised in the search, but for some time no clue was obtained, nor any suspicious-looking vessel sighted. It was not until the "Hu-po" was about to return that the two Chiangchow men drew the captain's attention to a junk which they recognised as their own, being *yuhloed* across a creek by two men. An armed party was at once despatched in the ship's long-boat, and on nearing the craft a number of armed men suddenly sprang up from behind the bulwarks and lined the vessel's side, offering every resistance and challenging the boat's crew who, after a short and decisive conflict, effected a boarding and, with little bloodshed, managed to overpower and secure sixteen desperate-looking characters. Three of those captured stated that they were merely passengers in the junk, and had no idea that they were among pirates. These men, however, appearing very suspicious, having many ugly scars about their bodies, were confined in the Yâmen, pending further investigations.

The chief of the gang, probably by arrangement with the Yâmen "runners," evaded his sentence of *lingchi*,* by strangling himself in his prison cell, and one of the worst-looking villains saved his head by turning informer. The latter stated that they were only stragglers from a large band of pirates that were about in those waters. The remaining eleven, all of whom were notorious scoundrels, underwent severe torture, and for some time doggedly refused to own their guilt, especially four of them, from whom confession was only extracted at the last moment; after frightful usage. In a fainting condition, they were taken from the knee-rack and dragged forward to the magistrate's table, and when there the "runners" dipped each culprit's finger in the ink and held it out to sign, or blotch, the death-sentence which lay upon a red cushion.

These pirates were decapitated on the 2nd of September, 1890,

* *Ling-chi* is the most frightful and dreaded form of punishment in China, the victim being cut in a thousand pieces and disembowelled, the skin of the forehead being first cut and peeled, and hung like a shade before the eyes, other frightful disfigurements and tortures following, with a slow lingering death.

at half-past ten in the morning, on the east beach and outside the city gates. There were thousands of spectators, and a rescue of the prisoners being expected, several hundred armed soldiers surrounded the condemned men. According to the accounts of those foreigners present at the execution, the death sentence was carried out very humanely by the Taotai, as each man had his own executioner; and they died together and at the same time.

The most daring and disastrously successful piracy of late years, since that of the steamer "Greyhound," seventeen miles from Hongkong, on her usual run to Canton on the 8th of October, 1885, when Captain Syder was brutally murdered, was the "Namoa" piracy in 1890. The startling news of this outrage created a general feeling of unsafety and consternation among the foreign communities in China, mingled with grief and just resentment for the cold-blooded murder of Captain Pocock and Mr. Petersen, both most popular and respected men, the latter being a member of the Customs Service.

On Sunday, the 3rd of December, 1890, the Douglas, Lapraik, and Co's coasting steamer, "Namoa," commanded by my late most esteemed friend Capt. Pocock, left Hongkong at noon, bound on her usual trip up the coast to Swatow, Amoy, and Foochow with several European and a large number of Chinese passengers, most of the latter being Fuhkien people returning to their native homes after many years absence in the United States and California, each with his little hoard of hard-earned dollars, gained by a small lifetime of frugal toil and self-denial in a distant land. These poor men were nearing their well-remembered haunts of earlier days, to once more spend among the relations and friends of their youth the fast-approaching New Year.

The weather was all that could be desired, and the steamer sped swiftly along over the calm waters, and all was peaceful and snug aboard. Eight bells sounded at noon, and soon afterwards the steward's loud-sounding gong summoned those aft to *tiffin*. Capt. Pocock now left the bridge in charge of the second officer, and joining the passengers on the quarter-deck, they went below to the saloon together. As they entered the companion-way, at the top of which the Captain's berth is situated, one of the passengers

pointing to the arm-rack with its rifles and cutlasses, which was placed above the stairway, remarked to Captain Pocock that the ship was well armed.

"Yes," replied the worthy skipper, little dreaming of the danger and death impending; "we required those in the old days, but they are more for ornament than use now."

They passed down into the saloon, where a sumptuous meal awaited them. One passenger, Mr. Peterson, who was returning to his station after sick leave, and, owing to ill-health and the unaccustomed motion of the vessel, remained on deck, reclining aft in a long cane chair, had his tiffin taken up to him by one of the stewards. The Chief Engineer, as was his custom when leaving port, took his mid-day meal in his berth forward.

The deck was now comparatively deserted, except by one Malay quartermaster and those on the bridge. All were at meals: the captain, chief officer and passengers aft, the engineers and junior officers down forward in their between-deck cabin, and the Chinese crew further forward in the forecastle; and the bridge was occupied by the second officer and one Malay quartermaster at the wheel. The ship was almost motionless, and went smoothly and steadily along for Swatow, which would be reached on the morrow.

Several Chinese passengers now came up out of the main between-decks and walked about for some minutes in a seemingly aimless manner; then others emerged from the hatch, until there were between forty and fifty on deck—some forward near the hatchway leading down to the junior officers' mess, others near the bridge ladder and entrance to engine-room and stokehole, and the rest at the main hatchway, saloon entrances and after skylight.

Suddenly, at a given signal, off came their loose outer garments, and these harmless-looking passengers were armed men; each with a cutlass and two revolvers in hand, and at their appointed stations.

Before Mr. Peterson, who, as I explained, was sitting aft, could rise from his chair, he was riddled with bullets, and dropped down dead near the wheelbox. The Malay quartermaster, in running to give the alarm, was so seriously wounded that he fell senseless and was thrown overboard. At the same time bullets

rained down through the skylight upon those at the saloon table, but fortunately no one was seriously hurt, and they at once retreated into the side berths. The officers in the forward mess-room were treated in the same manner, and the second officer was led from the bridge by three men holding the muzzles of their revolvers at his head. Knowing that he had the keys of the treasure-room, they made him open it. To their disappointment, and for a wonder, it was entirely empty. The quartermaster at the wheel on the bridge was wounded in several places and afterwards succumbed to his injuries.

The ship was now entirely in the hands of the pirates, whose leader placed one of the gang at the helm, with directions to steer a certain course.

The attack had been planned and carried out with consummate tact and forethought, for the pirates were old hands—desperate scoundrels, indeed, some of them having taken part in the "Greyhound" piracy. They knew by experience that to hold the deck was everything, and only two or three ventured below—and those went down among their terror-stricken countrymen, and ransacked their luggage, robbing them of their treasured packets of dollars, saved during long and lonesome years of comparative exile and drudgery. Every cent was taken from these poor fellows, who wept in vain, and heart-rending scenes ensued. But the wretches took all.

The leader of the gang called down to Captain Pocock in the saloon, saying that if he would deliver himself up, they would spare his life and the lives of those on board. The captain's native "boy" and steward both entreated him not to go, as he would surely be murdered. But the noble-minded man, for the sake of those entrusted to his care, waving his hand to the passengers, advanced up the steps leading on deck. No sooner had he gained the top than he was shot at from both sides, and fell, riddled with bullets, outside the door of his berth into which he managed to drag himself and close the door.

When the first attack was made, the chief engineer rushed out of his room forward, and made his way aft to the saloon, running the gauntlet in a most remarkable manner. At the companion door he was met by a great burly ruffian, who fired point blank

at him. Dashing the pistol up, he managed to escape unhurt into the saloon, joining the rest of its terror-stricken inmates.

Time after time the pirates tried by threats and promises to inveigle them up on deck, but they steadfastly refused to leave the saloon, and took refuge in their respective berths, in which they locked themselves. Whereupon the pirates, who would not descend to them, commenced cutting through the deck above. At last the poor fellows below found their hiding places untenable; and finally, in fear of their lives, went up, placing themselves at the mercy of their scoundrelly captors, who made them stand in a line on deck, and, while some covered them with their revolvers, others rifled their pockets, the meanwhile subjecting them to all manner of disgraceful insults.

Then they were all driven into the captain's little berth, which was barely large enough to hold them all, where they were nearly suffocated. For the pirates nailed up the doors and window, and they were crowded in that small space with poor Captain Pocock. They lifted him into his bunk, and he died with Christian fortitude, heroically bidding good-bye and shaking hands with them all, and sending a farewell message of love and condolence to his beloved wife and children in Hongkong, whom he had only taken leave of a few short hours ago. He then expired, in much pain, before the eyes of those who will never forget that awful day.

Throughout the afternoon these terror-stricken passengers, expecting every moment would be their last, remained in this small berth imprisoned with the dead body of the captain. The steamer sped along on an altered course until eight p.m. in the evening, when they neared a small island, and two junks hove in sight.

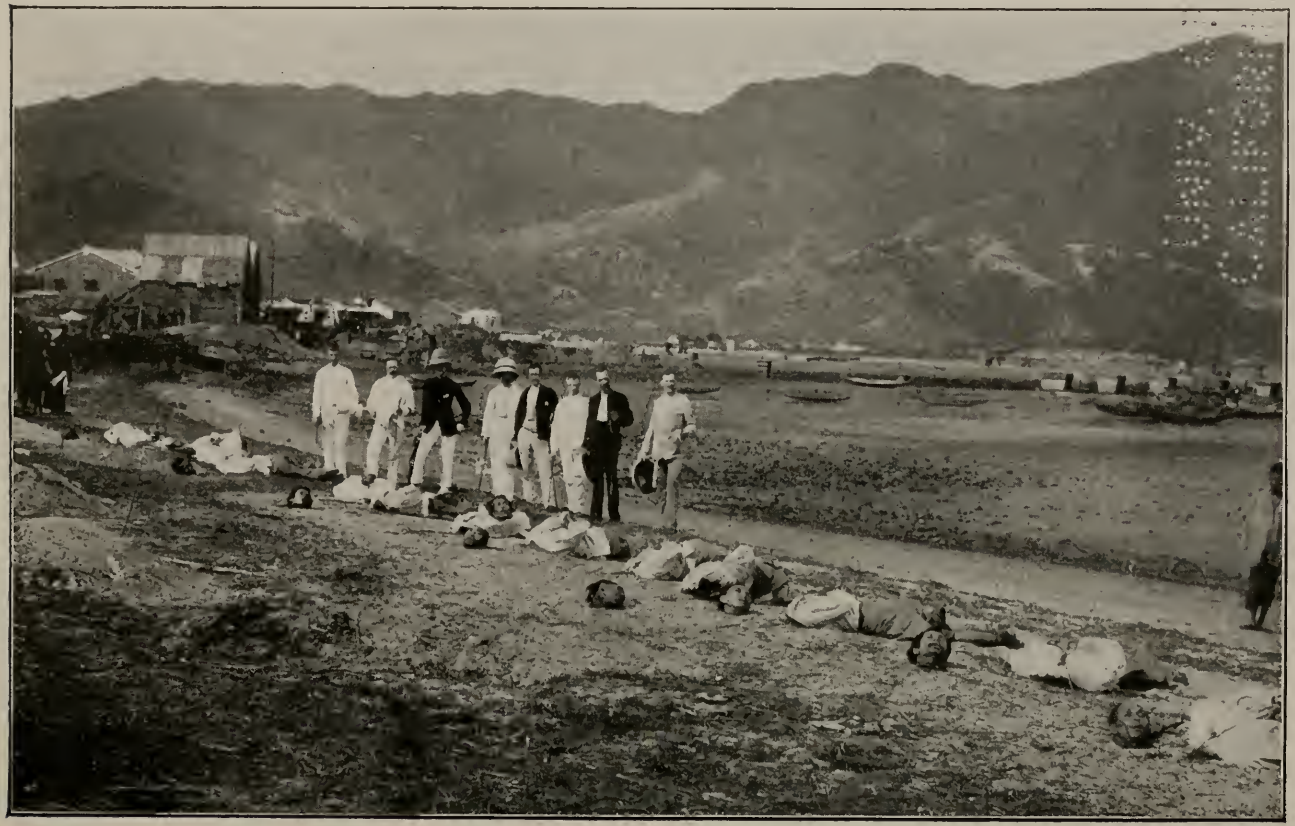
Then she was slowed down and brought to an anchorage, and the two junks came alongside. The pirates now made some of the under-stewards and cooks prepare them a sumptuous repast on the quarter-deck, where they sat down and feasted themselves. After this they held a consultation. Some proposed burning the steamer and leaving those on board to their fate, and others that they should disable her as much as possible, break the windlass to prevent them heaving the anchor up, and leave with the booty. The latter plan was finally adopted.

Those who had been guarding the treasure below, handed it up, buckets full of silver dollars being passed aboard the junks, and all other valuables, amounting altogether to about twenty-five thousand dollars. Having transferred the booty safely to the vessels alongside, the pirates, throwing a bag of dollars down to the Chinese firemen in the stokehole, some of whom were no doubt confederates of theirs, quitted the steamer, making off in the junks which set sail and soon disappeared in the fast-gathering gloom.

When they had gone the terrified and excited passengers and crew freed themselves—the former being much affected and shocked on finding the mutilated body of Mr. Peterson lying in a pool of blood near the after wheel. With feverish anxiety lest the pirates should return, the officers set about in earnest to repair the damaged windlass gear; and the engineers—one of whom had been severely wounded by a bullet in the hand, while pluckily defending the entrance to the engine room with his revolver—went below, soon setting everything to rights. Thanks to the united efforts of the engineers and deck hands, assisted by the passengers, the "Namoa" at length steamed back to Hongkong, arriving there with the terrible news shortly after midnight.

Public indignation was great, and considerable pressure was brought to bear on the Chinese Government to bring the pirates to justice. Skilled foreign and Chinese detectives were sent out on their track, doggedly determined to run these criminals to earth and make them pay the full penalty of their dastardly deeds.

Inspectors Stanton and Quincey, of the Police Detective Department of Hongkong, noted for their conspicuous bravery and knowledge of the Chinese—the former being an eminent Oriental scholar and prolific writer on Chinese subjects—greatly distinguished themselves on this occasion, tracing with remarkable ingenuity and determination the movements of the pirates, who immediately after landing, dispersed to various parts of the Kwangtung province. But, thanks to the commendable exertions of these two experienced detectives, assisted by the popular and respected Admiral, Fong Yu, who was very friendly to foreigners, and who risked his life more than once in capturing almost single handed, in the country near Canton, several of the head men of the



AFTER THE EXECUTION.

"Namoa" pirates, most, if not all, of these notorious crime-hardened criminals were eventually brought to justice, suffering decapitation outside Kowloon city, the majority of them being executed on Monday, April 17th, 1891, and the remaining nineteen on Thursday, 11th May, of the same year.

For some time great precautions were taken by the captains and officers of coasting steamers to search the luggage of all native passengers, and thus guard against a similar catastrophe. Nevertheless, sixteen months after the "Namoa" piracy, and even after the world had been ridden of most of the dastardly perpetrators of it, the steamship "Cosmopolit," in June, 1892, during her short passage from Hongkong to Hoihow, on the island of Hainan—which we shall visit later on—had a very narrow escape from falling into the hands of pirates.

It appears that the "Cosmopolit," shortly before leaving Hongkong for Hoihow, and when at the Kerosine-anchorage, the chief compradore came aboard in a very excited state and informed the captain that he had received the alarming warning that a band of pirates were aboard among the passengers. The captain immediately communicated this intelligence to all the Europeans, mates and engineers on board, and they forthwith armed themselves and went below into the between-decks to search the passengers. They succeeded in finding several knives and revolvers secreted about the deck; but the would-be pirates were nowhere to be found. On ascending again to the deck, however, they learned from a quartermaster on duty at the gangway that several Chinese with elongated bundles had gone ashore again almost immediately on their arrival at the Kerosine-anchorage. So they rightly concluded that the villains had somehow "got the tip"—perhaps from some interested friend among the steamer's crew, possibly an unsuspected fireman hovering about in a black mask of coal-dust and soot—and had wisely decamped in time to save their necks and reserve their energies for a more favourable opportunity—perhaps aboard some unsuspicious and unprepared vessel whose crew have half forgotten the "Namoa" disaster, and have allowed themselves to be lulled by the lapse of time into a delusive sense of security, a thing to be rigorously guarded against as imminently perilous to life and favourable to the wary pirate.

"More firm and sure the hand of courage strikes
When it obeys the watchful eye of caution."

What is seriously wanted and what is manifestly needful for the safety of all ships and their crews trading on the China coast is the adequate means of coping, first with arm-smuggling conspirators, and then with the actual pirates who infest that coast. In order to do this the Government should establish at intervals along the Praya at Hongkong certain search-houses or examination-sheds, where all outward passengers and their luggage could be properly searched before proceeding to their respective ships. As a guarantee to those aboard that these passengers have been searched, each of the latter should be provided with a ticket certifying to that effect, the said ticket to be collected by some responsible person aboard and duly returned, signed by captain or chief-officer to the "shed," or harbour office. There should also be certain large open boats provided exclusively for embarking passengers, and should be under the supervision of reliable Government servants. So that after the passengers for such and such a vessel had received their search tickets, they should enter this special boat and be taken aboard, the captain and officers to be notified and warned that only native passengers arriving alongside by these Government boats, which should bear some distinguishing mark, are safe to be allowed aboard. There are many captains and owners who would gladly help to defray the expenses incurred by these simple but very needful precautions. But until some such stringent measures are adopted we shall at intervals hear of these terrible outrages.

On the 3rd of December, 1890, I received orders from Pekin to proceed to Tamsui, on the island of Formosa, which is only twenty-four hours' run across from Amoy. I left for that port on the afternoon of December 4th in the s.s. "Hailoong," and several of my Chinese friends came aboard to see me off, each offering his little farewell presentation and a blessing: and it was with much emotion that I left them and that beautiful harbour, with its old-world memories and scenes.

FAREWELL TO AMOY.

S.S. "Hailoong," December 5th, 1890.

Farewell, Amoy! In sadness I depart,
For 'mid thy rocks reposes still my heart.
My fleeting hours upon your tranquil shore
Will be remember'd till my days are o'er,
With mem'ries dear.

Farewell, sequester'd nooks and sunny scenes,
Remembrance for a moment intervenes,
And touching Then and Now with kindly rays,
Fast setting in the sky of bygone days,
Brings peace of mind.

Farewell, snug harbour, with your old-world ships,
And antiquated sailors, from whose lips
Strange drowsy chaunts I've heard at morn and eve,
When, hoisting sail, the junks prepared to leave
With fav'ring tide.

Farewell, half-hidden homesteads grandly graced
By Nature's fairest foliage interlaced;
Where weary eyes and hearts find happy ease,
Beneath huge boulders and o'erhanging trees
Near to the sea.

Farewell, majestic highlands, where the crown
Of dying Day reclines upon a gown
Of unseen flowers, lone groves of wind-swept firs,
And quaint, time-hallowed sepulchres,
Watched o'er by Death.

Grim sentry! Keep your silent watch, until
Above the rugged crest of yonder hill,
Far eastward, in the early morning skies,
The everlasting Star of Life shall rise
To give you rest.

Great Death! My wondering mind doth often rest
Upon your silent home, and in the west
Can picture you alone, in calm survey
Of countless ages, looking far away,
Whence Life shall come.

XIX.—TAMSUI AND KEELUNG.

THE island of Formosa, or "Lovely Island" as the early Portuguese settlers named it, but which is known to the Chinese as "Taiwan," or "Great Bay," is one of the largest islands in the Eastern Seas, and is situated between 22° and 26° north latitude and 122° east longitude, being separated from the mainland of China, of which it is a dependency, by a channel about 130 miles in width, and its vegetation is of a most luxurious character. Nearly the whole of the mountainous and thickly-wooded eastern side of the island is inhabited by savage tribes very hostile to the Chinese, with whom they wage continual warfare.

Speaking of these aboriginal inhabitants, a writer says, "They are reported to be cannibal* in many places, and in their feasts and superstitions they seem to resemble the Malays and the inhabitants of Polynesia. Their worship is of the simple barbarous kind common among the inhabitants of the uncivilized islands in the Eastern seas, the object of adoration in their case being a post decorated with three skulls, generally those of a deer, pig, and bear, although the offerings deemed acceptable in their temples in many places are the heads or pig-tails of the Chinese they have slain. They are much fairer and better formed than the latter, are armed with bows and arrows, or with weapons of

* The Baha tribe, which is now almost completely extinct, were notorious head-hunters and cannibals, and the heart of a Chinaman was considered quite a delicate article of food. The author has known instances within the last few years when the inland Paiwan tribe have, after battle, slain and eaten their prisoners and drank their blood.

Chinese manufacture, and are great hunters. Owing, however, to the infrequency of exploring expeditions and the difficulties and dangers of the attempt, but little is known of these tribes, and what is told must be taken with a certain degree of reservation. A large number of aborigines, originally inhabiting the western side of the island, are now settled in a half civilized state at a short distance from the coast, and are a fine featured race, who appear to agree well with the Chinese. These aborigines have possession of the whole of the plains, and are regarded as the possessors of the country, though they really occupy no more than a comparatively small portion, which is cultivated in the usual Chinese manner, and occupied by villages and towns, such as are found in the "Celestial Empire."

The port of Tamsui, or "Sweet Water", which is merely a fictitious name, its real appellation being Horbie, or "Near the Sea," is situated on the north-west of the island in latitude 25° 10′ N. and longitude 210° 27′ 30″ E. A very dangerous sand-bar guards the entrance to the port, but light-draft vessels, from 13ft. to 14ft., can enter at high water. As you near the harbour an old Dutch fort, of which comparatively nothing is known, and from which a subterranean passage is supposed to connect with a cave at Keelung, looms up grimly above a high hill upon which the few European residents have built their houses. This fort is leased for the British Consulate, and the British flag waves from its battlements, the old building being in a fairly good state of preservation, and the walls 10ft. in thickness. But a very musty smell pervades the interior, and bats flit about through the lofty rooms, some of which form the Consular constable's residence.

To the right of the harbour a double-peaked hill, backed by the more distant Tamsui Mountains, rises to a height of nearly 3,000ft. From the port a small river runs some fourteen miles inland, deriving its source from the Keelung gorge, near which the city of Banka is situated, and further on Taipafoo, the walled capital, where the Chinese Governor resides, and which is quite close to the city of Twatutia, celebrated for its foreign tea hongs, the Oolong, Pakmo, and Cha-jum teas coming from there.

WATER-BUFFALOES.

Some fairly good shooting may be had about Tamsui, but the large water-buffaloes often prove very hostile and dangerous to foreign sportsmen. These active, though uncouth looking animals are very keen scented, and are able to discover the whereabouts of a white man at a long distance should the latter happen to be to windward of them. The following brief extract from my diary gives an account of an unsuccessful shooting expedition of mine:—

"Tamsui, April 16th, 1891.—This is indeed a very dull place, and game seems unusually scarce this season. I went out shooting yesterday. At six a.m., on sport intent, I shouldered my trusty gun and made a devious and decidedly dirty course for the 'preserves,' which lie far beyond the broad bogs (called 'paddy-fields,' out of courtesy), and which are supposed to have once been frequented by snipe and buffaloes. I saw none of the former, and placed their existence as legendary; of the latter I was not deceived, for on crossing one of those peculiarly prolific "fields," by means of a very soft and narrow ridge of genuine mud, I suddenly became aware that my presence was noticed by a solid and determined looking representative of the bovine species, who seemed very interested in my behalf. I did not drop my gun or endeavour to fire a salute with No. 6 shot, but I regarded him. I looked at him gently and wistfully. Unaccustomed perhaps to this mode of procedure, he sought to put me on a more favourable footing, and as a kind of greeting, bellowed loudly. He then inserted his head well between his forelegs, and in that obsequious attitude advanced with much dispatch towards me. Being of a retiring nature and not wishing to cultivate his acquaintance, I availed myself of my legs and found shelter in a bamboo plantation outside of which he stood in much perplexity, while I brought down a strange bird resembling a sparrow. Result of day's sport: one bird, origin doubtful; and one kingfisher, blown to pieces."

About seven miles from Tamsui are some very fine sulphur springs. The sulphur is collected from these springs by the natives and made into cakes, which are exported.

The chief exports are tea, camphor, and camphor-wood planks, coal, and indigo—the latter being mostly carried in native junks

to Amoy. There are also some rich gold mines on the island especially in the Kapsulan Hills in North Formosa, but the Chinese authorities will not allow them to be opened out to any extent, although the ground has been prospected and several rich veins struck by experienced Australian and Californian miners, who have tried in vain to obtain permission to work them. An ancient Chinese work, entitled "Tai-wan Fu Chi," tells how the aborigines in olden times took quantities of gold from the bottoms of creeks and melted it into bars, which they concealed in long earthen jars, not knowing its value, until they found that they could exchange it for cloth and other useful commodities. It must have been a very profitable business for those who traded with them, far more so than digging for the precious metal.

The journey from Tamsui to Keelung, which used to be made in narrow rapid-boats, or "dug-outs," through the gorge, but which is now reached by rail, is extremely pleasant and interesting, being diversified with beautiful sub-tropical scenery, pasture lands studded with clumps of graceful bamboos, tree ferns, dense and stately forests, and wild tree-covered mountains, with the glimpse of an ancient temple now and again.

One bright May morning, with my friend, Mr. Chew Leong Ho, secretary and interpreter to the Governor of Formosa, I started on a trip by land and river to Keelung. Having packed a few necessary effects, we went down to Mr. Tan-ah Soon's jetty—Mr. Tan-ah Soon being the Tamsui ship-chandler and steam-launch owner—where one of his saffron-coloured launches called the "Soon-fa" was moored to the amputated limb of a tree, which was driven into the muddy bed of the river. This craft was loaded with a somewhat valuable deck cargo of recently picked tea, packed in long narrow bags. We embarked at eleven a.m., and after climbing over a full complement of Chinese passengers with all their goods and chattels, seated ourselves in the fore part of the boat, my friend appropriating the rail, and making a remarkably uncommon figure-head, while I spread a blanket in the ample coils of the bow-line and endeavoured to light a cigar, seemingly to the great amusement of our fellow passengers, who had grouped themselves about the floor, and were wiling the time

away by smoking and searching in their garments for sandflies and other undesired insects too numerous to mention.

The pilot was not aboard, but, after a quarter of an hour's suspense, an ancient-looking "Celestial," minus his front teeth, came springing and leaping down the jetty like a will-o'-the-wisp or demoralized spring-heeled Jack impelled by a typhoon. He was attired in a blue coat remarkable for its raggedness, and a rakish-looking toper conspicuous for its numerous air-holes. This was our pilot.

We now untethered from the aforesaid post, and after about ten minutes steaming at full speed, passed Piatow, which we soon left on the port quarter, together with the lichen-covered and deserted residence of Messrs. Dodd and Co. Here the river deepened and widened, culminating in a narrow channel which the pilot religiously kept on the starboard bow, where the stock of an anchor, protruding above the rail, answered the purpose of a compass. This pass is very picturesque. On the south side the bluff rises abruptly to a height of 280ft., and is covered with green bamboos and flowery shrubs, while from the south hill, which is less lofty but equally verdant, an old fortification frowns solemnly down. On our way through this passage a bag of tea caught fire; this was occasioned by some Chinese gentleman distributing the ashes of his pipe rather indiscriminately. It was very fortunate that our cargo did not consist of gunpowder, or this veracious narrative would never have been penned.

The accommodation aboard was very poor for first-class passengers, who unanimously agreed to sit upon the floor. Shortly after the tea-fire escapade, a rapid-boat was sighted on the port bow. It carried a valuable and comely freight of young "Celestial" ladies, who seemed very anxious that we should take them in tow, as the wind and tide were unfavourable to their bark, which the captain had wisely moored to a bamboo. As regards myself I had no objection whatever to assist these young damsels in distress; but our skipper — who seemed responsible for fares, and acted in the capacity of bus-conductor — informed them through five-fingered symbols that before he could do so they would have to balance with cents the extra strain on the propeller, coal bunker,

and his mental faculties, occasioned by towing so large a vessel as their dug-out to a distant port. His demands did not altogether meet with their approval, so we steamed ahead, leaving with some reluctance these fair creatures, who sat looking after us so sorrowfully and helplessly, that they seemed to murmur,

> "What shall we do, our Palinurus gone,
> And left to steer through untried seas alone?"

We passed on, however, and as the wind increased from the northward the pilot donned three thick coats at once, while a relative of his produced from beneath a blanket of indisputable antiquity the remnants of a large straw hat, in the crown and round the scraggy rim of which a number of questionable-looking cakes were deftly arranged to tempt the appetite of all hands aboard the good ship "Soon-fa." These dainties were profitably sold with much dispatch, and devoured with equal avidity. At three p.m. we descried a large wooden bridge right ahead. Passing under this we arrived at Twatutia shortly after one o'clock, and had some slight refreshment at the store of a Straits Chinaman named Theang Lai, who was a venerable and enthusiastic old gentleman, and a great admirer of Mr. Gladstone, whom he continually extolled, and to whom he was in the habit of perpetually drinking libations of champagne and making his visitors do likewise. I heard more about Mr. Gladstone and his affairs that day than ever I had heard before or have heard since, or am likely to hear again. We left the hospitable old fellow dreaming, no doubt, about our beloved Prime Minister; but I must acknowledge that he was remarkably clever and entertaining and his establishment is a boon to residents and a god-send to globe-trotters.

I have very little to say about the important city of Twatutia beyond recording that it is full of bold and ugly red-brick buildings, and tea-boxes everywhere—even the air seems impregnated with tea, and hardly anything else can be got there. At three p.m. we strolled over to the railway station, and purchased, from a soldier in a mat-shed, for the sum of twenty-two cents, a couple of tickets which permitted us to travel as far as the rail extended,

and walk the rest of the way. At 3.30 p.m. we commenced flying over the country at fully seven miles an hour, at the imminent risk of being shot into the paddy-fields which form a considerable part of the scenery, until arriving at Su-tin-ka, where passengers have to change. This station, like all others on the line, is delightfully Oriental and interesting to foreigners, being composed of a few bamboo sheds and mud-huts, where the tired traveller can sit on a Foochow pole and regale himself with congee, cake, and tea for the small sum of thirteen cash, to wit: —

1 basin of congee...	5 cash.
1 basin of tea	3 „
1 sweet cake or rice-ball, covered with a kind of saw-dust	5 „
Total	13 cash.

Outside these huts, and directly facing a coal shed and a stack of condemned "sleepers," a sort of closed sentry-box, with a hole cut under the roof, holds a large and important looking clock which has unfailingly gone wrong since its erection, and is only suffered to remain there presumably to remind the engine-drivers that they must frequently consult their own watches. After waiting for two hours, during which interval we had plenty of time to become acquainted with the hilly neighbourhood, our train came ambling along, short of water and coal. We mounted to a car (provided for foreigners and Chinese officials) which was furnished with a bench on either side and one in the middle, and windows provided with canvas blinds that let the fresh air in plentifully and were not so brittle as glass.

Just as we were moving on two Chinese officials entered. One yawned very loudly and spat on the floor, while the other picked up a large stone which held the car door open, and, rubbing it on the seat to remove all dirt, placed it, Jacoblike, beneath his head and slept philosophically, enlivening the way with some phenomenal snoring, which he kept up until we entered the tunnel. Then he arose and struck a match for the purpose of ascertaining whether he was alone in that dark place, and would have gone

off to sleep and snore again had the train remained in the tunnel.

The Custom House at Keelung is by far the best building there and overlooks the beautiful bay. Looking due north and facing the verandah, a sandy beach is capped by small waves which make drowsy music as they ripple and break, falling back into the sea which stretches away past shoal and coral reef in deep tranquillity, only disturbed by gentle zephyrs from the north, which make the atmosphere pleasant and healthy during the warm months of summer. Here, close to the beach and looking out to sea, a white marble cross is erected to the honoured memory of eight brave men who went out in a terrific typhoon to save a shipwrecked crew, but were themselves lost, their bodies being cast ashore near where the monument stands. The inscription is very simple:—

"*In the midst of life we are in death.*"

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF

Lieut. Charles Gardner, R.N.,
J. S. Greig, Esq., Merchant,
John Westmoreland, Leading Stoker,
John S. Greig, Capt. Forecastle,
Robert B. Mingo, A.B.,
George Osborne, Henry T. Higgins, Hubert Simmons, } Stokers,

OF H.M.S. "KESTREL,"

Who were drowned at the Wreck of the "Laptek," off Formosa, during a Typhoon on the 17th and 18th of July, 1874.

It is a quiet and beautiful place, and, were it better known, would be much visited by people from Amoy and Shanghai, who usually spend the season in Chefoo which for scenery and bathing facilities, cannot be compared with Keelung. The only foreign residents there were Lieut. Hecht (since dead), Captain Petersen, and, in the Customs, Messrs. Martin and Thogorsen, all of whom were exceedingly hospitable, whose residences snugly nestle under

a steep, bush-covered hill that rises to a height of about 200ft., and is scaled by a hewn stairway of 280 steps, the foot of which rests a few yards to the eastward of the Custom House. These steps lead up to the new fort (designed by and built under the supervision of the late Lieut. Hecht) which commands a grand range of the harbour and mounts a formidable battery of three 15, 18, and 24-ton Armstrong guns and three smaller quick-firing guns. This fort stands directly above and overlooks the blackened ruins of the silent fort below, where the shattered remains, of five 9-calibre Krupp guns which played so fiercely on the "La Galissonnière," under Admiral de Lespés, during the Franco-Chinese trouble in 1885, have been left as maimed survivors of war, to sink with the crumbling walls and shell-pierced armaments of steel, all crippled and untouched, except by the hand of time since the day of their destruction. The sombre and blackened ruins of that fort, with their shell-wrecked guns and riddled walls, are indeed, well worthy of a visit.

In Keelung harbour, on the south shore of Mero Bay, is a very interesting cavern which is supposed to somehow connect with the subterranean passage leading from the old Dutch Fort, or "Red Fort", as it is called, at Tamsui. Its entrance in the soft sandstone rock is above 9ft. in height and 5ft. in breadth, and has the appearance of having been originally excavated. No stalactites occur in this case, and explorers have only ventured in for a distance of 700 or 800 yards, and then, when firing a rifle, the sound reverberated a great distance; so that no one knows the length or proper direction of this cavern, which is well worthy of careful exploration. The Chinese say that the celebrated pirate Koxinga used it, storing his valuables and confining his prisoners there.

To the N.N.E. Palm Island rises from the blue sea, guarding the entrance of the bay, with a warm mantle of rich tropical vegetation, in the depths of which the creeper-covered ruins of an ancient Spanish fort arouse the romantic ideas of the modern traveller, and he thinks of, and can even picture, the armour-clad exiles who placed those crumbling battlements in the ages long agone.

Mr. E. Stevens, late Harbour-Master at Tamsui, has surveyed a considerable portion of Formosa, especially about the port of Tamsui, making some very valuable and authentic maps of it. Thanks to his indefatigable labours, the harbour has of late years been rendered far more safe and navigable, through his having the buoys and mooring-chains properly secured; and his tide-tables, marks, and gauges, placed in prominent positions, are of inestimable value to captains of vessels trading there. Before he had done this the harbour was considered very unsafe. During the typhoon season, the river freshets often come down very suddenly, and sometimes carried ships out to the treacherous bar, where they were wrecked.

XX.—GOVERNORS LIU AND SHAO.

PREVIOUS to the year 1886 Formosa was treated by the Chinese Government as a portion of the Fuhkien province, and the Viceroy of Foochow, its capital, governed the island as a *fu*, or prefecture, visiting this dependency once and sometimes twice a year. These visits were very agreeable and remunerative to the Viceroy, as his subordinate officials in Formosa never failed on these occasions to offer him their tribute of sycee and valuable goods, for which the poor people were taxed and "squeezed" heavily.

During the Franco-Chinese difficulty in 1884—85, Formosa was invested by the French, who repeatedly tried to effect a landing in Tamsui and Keelung, the former place being most gallantly and ably defended by the Chinese General Liu-ming Chuan, who baffled the invaders, and four years later was appointed to the Governorship of Formosa. For seven eventful years in the annals of that island he fulfilled with commendable energy this high and responsible office, to the entire approval of all, foreigners and Chinese—especially those interested in the progress of Western civilization and the advancement of its industries in the "Celestial Empire."

He did an immense deal of good in developing the resources of this island and encouraged foreign intercourse, adopting its modes and inventions, and soon had the railway laid from Tamsui to Keelung, a distance of twenty-seven miles, extending across the northern end of the island east and west, at a cost of £500 per mile. Another line has recently been constructed from Twatutia to the southern extremity of the island, a distance of 250 miles.

This connects with the Keelung and Tamsui line, and is of the same—the 3ft. 6in. narrow metre gauge. Coeval with the railway he had two splendid coasting steamers, the "Cass" and "Smith," named after foreign merchants, built in England by Armstrong, to trade between the island and the mainland.

Liu-ming Chuan is one of the only three in the Empire who have ever attained both the highest military and civil rank; and there is no doubt that this old General, who formerly fought as a young man in the fifties beside the celebrated Wangs in the Taiping army, afterwards deserting and joining the Imperialists, and distinguishing himself during the close of the rebellion, has great influence with the high authorities at Pekin. He was also supposed to have considerable prestige with the aborigines, who inhabit the entire eastern portion of Formosa, and whose mountainous, tree-covered territory is quite inaccessible to invaders.

He at first tried to conquer these independent and warlike savages, and frequently sent out troops to subdue and bring them under the lash of the Chinese authorities; but these military expeditions always ended in bloodshed and disaster to those forming them, and as a rule very few returned to tell the tale of defeat. In the latter end of 1890 the intrepid old Governor himself led an expedition against the "savage rebels," as he called them; but, after desperate fighting, had to retreat, leaving behind him in the dense forests and jungle over 1,000 men, very few of whom ever returned. So finding he could not bring them to subjection, he latterly set about gaining their friendship, which he successfully and economically accomplished, *pro tem*, by sending annual presents to the chiefs of inexpensive but highly-prized articles—blankets, piece-goods iron pots, agricultural implements, beads, glasses, and trinkets, and through his diplomacy gained the camphor monopoly, which is a very profitable business. The camphor trees all stand in savage territory, and are hewn down, and the sap distilled and exported. The price of it is only eleven dollars per picul in Formosa, and it fetches from fifty to sixty dols. per picul in Hongkong, whence it is exported to Europe and America.

In the summer of 1891 Shao Yu-lien succeeded to the Governorship of Formosa, as Liu-ming Chuan retired from public life

to a quiet home in Anhui, near Wuhu, in the province of Honan. He expressed an earnest desire that the important works which he had commenced and ably fathered would flourish and be carried forward under the care of his successor, who, through long service and diplomatic ability, had already gained the confidence of foreigners and Chinese alike.

Shao Yu-lien had acted as secretary to Chung Hao when that unfortunate Ambassador came to grief over the Russo-Chinese Livadia Treaty in 1880; and Shao was afterwards made Taotai of Shanghai. He had also distinguished himself as one of the Opium Commission to India, with Mr. Hart (brother to Sir Robert, now Lord, Hart), and greatly assisted in decorating the few foreigners who rendered services to the Chinese Government during the bombardment of Tamsui and Keelung (one of the foremost being Mr. Cromarty, now chief engineer of the "Smith," who received the Double Order of the Dragon of the Second Degree). Since his succession he has conducted the important affairs of that island with the same watchful and far-seeing eye of his venerable and respected predecessor.

As the movements of high Chinese officials are always attended with much ludicrous noise and display, the reader might like to hear an authentic account of the departure of the celebrated and powerful Liu-ming Chuan from Formosa; and, in order to give this, I will quote from my diary: —

June 4th, 1891.—For the last few days there has been the usual excitement among the Chinese here consequent upon the movements of any high official. But at last all has happily terminated in grateful quietness, for His Excellency the Governor of Formosa and his vast retinue have sailed for his home on the Yangtsze. This morning broke clear and pleasant, and a gentle northerly wind lightly passed over land and water, making the atmosphere cool and exhilarating. At an early hour regiments of soldiers could be seen trooping out of the forts to the northward and westward, at a quick independent march, carrying dangerously rusty Snider rifles at the slope, butt uppermost, others tottering anyway but bravely under gay-coloured banners, while a few lean braves blew fitful blasts through elongated trumpets which were sufficient to

impress one with the solemnity of such a responsible situation, and the amount of wind required to create such a terribly bilious sound. These royal soldiers boldly lined the sea front or bund, and in anticipation of a pleasant day's outing and a meal before next morning, philosophically distributed themselves about the ground and greatly amused each other by firing caustic "squibs" at any civil person who passed through their ragged lines which faced the harbour, where a fleet of gaily-dressed merchant vessels were headed by the Formosa Trading Company's steamer "Cass," which the Governor had selected to bear him away. Consequently great preparations had been made on board for his reception, and every available piece of bunting had been used—she was one mass of flags and pennants from stem to stern and truck to deck.

All being in readiness and pronounced satisfactory, the Chinese crew, from compradore to cook, donned their finest garments and fluttered about the deck like birds-of-paradise in a most excited and consequential manner that reminded one of the witty holiday-going shoemaker of Plymouth, who, wishing to have an interview with the Admiral of the Fleet, went aboard the flagship, and when asked for his card sent in a message to the commander that one of the owners had called to see him.

At seven a.m. the soldiers on shore unfurled their banners, while the British ensign was gallantly raised over the grim Red Fort on the hill; and from the flag-staff in the Custom House the whole code of signals gave a desirable touch to the gay scene. About this time numerous boats, laden with Mandarins of all grades and ranks, went alongside the "Cass" which was soon crowded with these anxious-looking official tuft-hunters, who had come to take leave of His Excellency, and who issued numerous orders and went tearing about the ship, forward and aft, in a most lamentable manner, the short-intervals being diversified with Chinese crackers that popped and fizzed from every corner, singeing the hair of some, and causing others to move their stiff legs to extraordinary time. These loyal and festive proceedings went on to the universal approval of the gentlemen present, until about 10 o'clock, when Messrs. Douglas and Co.'s white-coloured launch

which had been watched for eagerly, steamed round a bend in the river, flying the princely colours, and towing two rapid-boats and several dirty sampans overloaded with all sorts and conditions of anxious men and weeping children.

Now those elongated trumpets ashore began to belch forth hurricanes of strange music which blended with the banging of various sized cannon and the extra musketry of squibs and all kinds of danger signals; and the drums rattled fast and furiously, greatly helping to excite and invigorate the hordes of awe-inspired mandarins on the steamer, who put up their voices right lustily and made a badly-organized scramble for the gangway, disputing every inch of ground with each other, and using their fans to prod the backs of those occupying the front ranks. I never before had seen such a demoralized, aristocratic Chinese mob. On shore a red rag-bedizened coolie could now be seen importantly dashing along the bund astride of a lean terrified steed which went snorting and ploughing the dust up, to the great danger of all those inhabitants who owned small children and live-stock. This was presumably an *aide-de-camp*, with a despatch for the Commander-in-Chief of the Tamsui forces advising the lieutenant of the furthermost regiment to immediately set the fireworks going.

Poor people, they do get awfully excited on these auspicious occasions and the soldiers, poor scamps, must have very long and patient appetites.

The above mentioned rapid-boats and sampans duly came alongside, and a murmur seemed to pass from every lip as the grand old General—a tall, shrewd-looking man, with dark black moustaches and a very dignified and imposing appearance—marched up the gangway ladder and was met by several high officials; while the "small fry" contented themselves with scraping their noses on the deck and otherwise spoiling their features for the benefit of their reputation and welfare.

This koutowing continued until His Excellence entered the saloon, where he was received by several foreigners, with whom he conversed for some time; while a crowd of inquisitive Mandarins and Yâmen loafers shaded and barred the windows and doors, forming an ugly and positively bad screen, on the

margin of which a number of well-dressed cooks, able seamen, and cake venders hovered about, trying to get a glance in edgeways over a multitude of obstinate heads. But the crowd gradually dispersed, and the steamer steamed away: and thus ended a very memorable occasion in the history of Formosa.

The country round about Tamsui is very hilly, and in most places well wooded, and I enjoyed some fairly good duck and snipe shooting. During the summer months, however, malaria fever is very prevalent, and of such a deadly nature that it reduces one to the last extremities; and, owing to its unhealthy climate, I was exceedingly glad to be transferred, after eleven months' residence there. In the month of November, 1891, my wife and I left in the s.s. "Formosa" for the southern port of Hoihow, on the island of Hainan.

FAREWELL TO FORMOSA.

S.S. "Formosa," November 25th, 1891.

Farewell, Formosa! Isle of crystal springs.
And fabled hills of gold;
O, for the countless treasures absence brings—
The mem'ries that you hold—
All left untold.

Farewell, Tamsui! little seaside town
Beneath the banyan trees,
Whose foliage weaves an emerald gown
Of beauty—but disease
Lurks in its folds.

Farewell, lone hill! whose sylvan slopes are paved
With ling'ring smiles of day;
And long-forgotten names are still engraved
On pages* by the way—
Where pass the clouds

* The hillsides are covered with tombs.

Farewell, Red Fort! No longer from those towers
The exiled sentries keep
Their lonely vigil thro' the anxious hours,
While exiled comrades sleep,
In armour clad.

Kozinga's warlike junks no longer rise
Above the sea's dark line;
No more beneath the gold of evening skies
Their blood-stained weapons shine—
For they have gone.

Gone! But a crumbling relic of their age
Is watching grimly o'er
The changing scenery of the time-worn stage,
Whose actors are no more—
No more than dust.

XXI.—A RUN DOWN THE COAST.

THE Douglas, Lapraik and Co.'s steamship "Formosa" was advertised to sail from Tamsui for Hongkong, *viâ* Amoy and Swatow, on Tuesday, November 24th, 1891, at 4.30 p.m. It had been blowing a very heavy N.E. gale for some days, consequently there was a tremendous sea breaking over the bar. This, however, did not intimidate our plucky commander, who, never loth, was ready to start. Precisely at the appointed time the propeller was tried—much to the annoyance of several enterprising *sampan* men—undergoing a sort of preliminary "backing and filling" process, to thoroughly satisfy the engineers that all was right with the engines, and to warn all loafers and cake venders that the ship was ready to start.

Then the Customs boat, with the gay yellow dragon-flag fluttering from the stern, hove in sight and came alongside. The ship's papers were delivered to the captain, and the steamer pronounced as "cleared" and prepared for sea. Then the whistle sounded, as did the voices of several superfluous loafers as they "cleared" over the side with considerable interest and remarkable despatch. But all to no purpose for old "Chop Dollar," the pilot, who had been anxiously surveying the angry "bar" for some time, solemnly declared that there was far too much sea breaking there; and a departure under these circumstances would have been attended with much risk and danger to ship and crew. So there was no other alternative but to remain where we were, and wile the time away as best we could, much to the satisfaction of all those who were not altogether desirous of taking soundings under most adverse circumstances.

Throughout the night the gale increased, and continued with unabating fury until the morning of the 27th, when Captain Hall determined, in spite of the dangerous-looking bar and the remonstrances of the Chinese pilot, to attempt a departure. The ship was accordingly got under way at 7.30 p.m., and headed out for the dreaded and often fatal barrier, where a line of white foam gradually assumed alarming dimensions as we steadily and swiftly approached.

A low thundering roar—a breaking of huge white-topped billows soon accompanied by a dull but alarmingly sudden and heavy thud which shook us considerably, was the first intimation that we sluggards received of the vessel's near approach to the bar of dark renown. She bumped twice. Answering for myself, I can truthfully say that I "shipped" my clothes with much promptitude, and, without waiting to complete my toilet, rushed out on deck, endeavouring, however, to appear much interested and equally unconcerned. I found that the actual bar was still a distance of some 40ft. or 50ft. ahead; and it was not at all pleasant or pretty to look at. I immediately ordered a cup of coffee, flavoured with Hennessy's nerve-giving "three star" cream, before further ascertaining, with a sigh of relief, that the steamer was now being manœuvred in such a manner as to place it beyond doubt that we were going back to breakfast in Tamsui. In turning round, the worthy captain showed no little skill in handling a large vessel in a dangerously narrow and shallow place, under the most critical and unfavourable circumstances.

Throughout that day the wind blew strong, veering about from north-east to north, occasionally accompanied by heavy squalls. During the afternoon we were invited by Captain Leffler aboard the steamer "Smith," which, with the "Cass" and the "Formosa," had been bar-bound for some days. We enjoyed a very pleasant musical afternoon aboard the "Smith," Mr. P——, one of our passengers, quite charming us with some of his own compositions arranged for the piano, which he rendered with much ability. We returned to a late dinner aboard the "Formosa," afterwards enjoying a very interesting chat, and the proverbial evening pipe with Captain Hall, who, throughout the trying passage across the stormy channel, was not only attentive, hospitable, and courteous,

but also very cheerful and entertaining, quite winning our confidence and esteem. As I have said before, the China-coast captains are a splendid set of hardy, hospitable men, who never change with the weather or veer with the wind.

Next morning, November 28th, the steamer got under way once more, and at eight a.m., in company with the "Cass," steamed down the harbour, soon leaving astern the rustic homes which nestle among the banyan trees and the tree-shaded Red Fort which crowns the hill above, scenes that are oft recalled in after years when many miles away.

The "Cass" kept a little in advance of the "Formosa" until crossing the bar, where a nasty "swell" was still breaking in some places. Here the former vessel bumped heavily once or twice, and, as we came quickly up close under her quarter, suddenly became stationary, having grounded on the bar. Then we gave a lurch, and also struck with a mighty thud, and it was only the very prompt and skillful way in which Captain Hall acted at this critical moment that saved both ships, which were then only about 40ft. apart, and would inevitably have crushed each other to pieces had they then "lagged" together, which was extremely difficult to prevent. I was standing on the bridge beside Captain Hall, and having been some years at sea, could realize the full extent of our danger, but he was quite calm and composed, standing with one hand on the engine-room telegraph, and eyes fixed on the other ship. Then his hand moved the handle and the electric bell rang.

"Full-speed astern" and "helm hard-a-starboard!" were now the prompt orders issued. And then, having worked our vessel to a safer position, and still being in danger of drifting to leeward, commands were given to go "full speed ahead" and "port the helm." Ahead we went in good style, passing the "Cass," which soon afterwards got off and shaped a northerly course, bound for Shanghai; while we bore away to the westward, soon changing our course to W. by S. ½ S. As the land gradually faded from sight, the wind increased to a gale, with a corresponding sea. The jib, fore-topsail, foresail, and fore and main trysails were then set, and, with wind abaft the beam, the "Formosa" went

booming" along at the rate of 12 knots an hour, and, in spite of the heavy sea that was running, behaved admirably, showing many of her good qualities to the best advantage. I can safely say that, for travellers to the southern ports of China, the Douglas, Lapraik and Co.'s steamers are the most safe and comfortable, and the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company's boats for the ports north of Shanghai.

Ockseu light was sighted on the starboard beam at five p.m., at which time we encountered several heavy squalls, with a little rain. Dodd Island was passed at ten p.m., and the sea became much smoother as we neared the land, so that the passengers were enabled to enjoy a fairly good night's rest, which was only pleasantly broken at 12.14 p.m. by the welcome sound of the anchor being dropped in the outer harbour of Amoy, after a smart run across of sixteen hours and fifteen minutes, covering 190 miles.

Sunday was spent quietly and uneventfully, and on Monday the harbour was gaily decorated, most of the vessels, of which there were many, displaying the code of signals and flying symbols of congratulation to a young lady and her bridegroom, captain of the barque "Sebastian Bach"—who were married at 3.30 p m., at the Union Church, Kulangsoo.

It appeared that there had been considerable excitement and apprehension felt in Amoy for some time owing to a threatened attack of some rioters, who goaded on by a number of Kolao Hwei* men, were advancing upon Amoy, coming from the country to the eastward, where they had committed great depredations. The Consuls, aided by the Taotai, managed however to intimidate them sufficiently to alter their plans and arrest their further progress, and all seemed quiet again; but a man-of-war would have given a sense of security not often felt by the numerous foreign residents there.

At "eight bells"—four o'clock—on the afternoon of November 30th, the "Formosa" again hove up anchor, bound for Swatow and Hongkong. Onward we went at full speed, soon leaving the

* The Kolao Hwei, Tripod, and Tsing Li Secret Societies are anti-Manchoo, and are very powerful.

pretty landscape far astern and getting into deep waters which were still disturbed by a strong north-east wind; and the recent gale had left a heavy swell that rolled with us to the southward, at times causing the vessel to work uneasily. We steered about W. by S. ½ S., on which course the Lammocks Light was sighted at 12.45 a.m., bearing W by S., and at 1.45 a.m. we passed it at a distance of one and a-half miles to the southward, at which time the engines were reduced to half-speed, as the night was very dark, and we were nearing a most dangerous part of the coast, rocks being all around, and no lights to mark their place. Now one of Messrs. Butterfield and Swire's boats, which had been for some time following up, steamed past on our starboard side and went ahead, but only to arrive at Swatow an hour or two after us.

Cape Light was sighted right ahead at 2.30 a.m., and at 2 a.m. the Sugar Loaf Light bore W. by N. The wind now increased again, until 4.30 a.m., when it blew a fresh north-easterly gale with following sea, and the sky was cloudy and overcast. Then the ship was slowed down until passing the Cape of Good Hope, when we again went full speed ahead, and at 6.55 a.m. made fast to the buoy in Swatow, this run being accomplished in 14 hours 55 minutes. During the day very little work was carried on aboard, and in the afternoon the third officer and one of the engineers went for some distance up the Han river, in search of game, and returned in the evening with a very creditable bag.

Swatow is situated on the border of the Kwangtung province, 213 miles to the north-east of Canton, in lat. 23° 23′ N. and long. 116° 42′ E., and was thrown open to foreign trade by the Earl of Elgin's Tientsin Treaty. It is the shipping station for the important commercial city of Chao-chou-fu, and several large and wealthy Hongkong firms have agencies at this port to which most of the cargoes of beans and beancake from Chefoo and Newchwang are brought, while the exports chiefly consist of sugar and oranges.

The coolie trade from Swatow also gives employment to a number of steamers, the coolies being carried to Singapore and Bangkok, whence they are drafted to the neighbouring plantations. The

Dutch planters in Sumatra have time after time endeavoured to establish this traffic between Swatow, Amoy, and Delhi direct; but have failed to do so, as Delhi is known to be a very unhealthy place—in fact, it is called the Chinaman's Grave, and coolies dread going there, and very few of those who do go there ever return. So that in many instances nefarious and altogether illegal measures have been resorted to by shippers and planters to procure coolies the former often offering from 300 to 400 dollars for each male adult; and in consequence the shippers mislead the poor natives and practically kidnap them away from the ports of Amoy and Swatow, whence most of the emigrants come.

The scenery and walks about Swatow are very picturesque; but to obtain an idea of their whereabouts it is necessary to go ashore, as the view from the harbour is most deceiving and even uninviting to strangers. Our steamer remained in harbour during the night, and next day shipped a large quantity of cargo—chiefly molasses in wooden tubs—before proceeding on her way. All being in readiness at four p.m., the usual formula of "clearing" was gone through, and we were soon speeding southward for Hongkong, where we arrived at eight a.m. next morning, after a most pleasant and instructive trip, that was much enhanced by the courteous attention and hospitality of the genial captain and officers.

I remained that night in Hongkong which we shall visit later on, and proceeded next day in the Messageries Maritimes Company's coasting steamer "Haiphong" to Hoihow.

XXII.—HOIHOW AND KIUNGCHOW.

WHEN the "Haiphong" came to an anchorage in the Hainan Straits, off Hoihow, after a smart and smooth passage of eighteen hours from Hongkong, I soon found that the worst part of the journey had yet to be encountered in going ashore from the steamer.

The anchor had no sooner touched the bottom than about fifty flat-bottomed sailing *sampans* dashed alongside. They came sailing up as if intending to flatten their bows in against the ship's iron sides, and thus test the stability of the hard seasoned wood with which they are built. But such was by no means their intention, for, when within a few feet of the steamer, they suddenly shifted the tiller hard over, and turned round, as if on a pivot, within their own length. I soon found that the secret of this lay in the strong wooden centre-boards they so much depend upon on these occasions, and when sailing on a wind. I called the *lowdah* of one of the boats, and asked him through the five-fingered code and in "pidgin" English, how much he would charge to transfer my wife and self and our luggage to Hoihow.

He put up ten dirty fingers, and ejaculated the word "dolla." I naturally enough remonstrated; then he turned from me with evident disgust, making use of some complimentary epithets which I fortunately did not understand. But he was a good honest fellow, no doubt, in his own estimation; for he soon returned with a benign smile illuminating his greasy countenance, and playfully held six dirt-begrimed fingers in close proximity to my nose. This time I turned away with evident disgust, which

evoked a hearty "*haiya!*" from this worthy man and his chief sail-raiser, who had now come up to support the waning interests of his master.

Well, after much fist-raising, *haiyaing*, and similar forcible language used in these controversies, they agreed to land us and our "traps" in Hoihow for two dollars, just exactly a fifth of what they asked at first, and just one dollar more than I ought to have paid. While we had been arguing the tide had been falling lower and lower, so that by the time we got to the "sand-spit," as it is called, it was nearly dead low water. We had now to cross a mud flat, extending about three miles, and covered with from two to twelve inches of water—the latter depth being only found in the proper channels which, through their intricate windings, none but the native boatmen know.

After sliding over these muddy flats, where grim-visaged shrimp collectors endlessly roam, ever patient, poor, expectant and resigned, we reached the first "gun-house," as my worthy conductor styled the first antiquated half-ruined fort that guards the river, just as the last streaks of light faded out of the cheerless sky. After passing another crumbling fort, we at length brought up before the Custom House—a most unimposing old Chinese building of doubtful age and sombre aspect. Here I was met by a gentleman, evidently of Dutch descent, who smiled at me, and gave me to understand that he filled the responsible post of Acting Harbour Master and Tide-surveyor. Having imparted this valuable information, he smiled again and placing his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, called in a stentorian voice, calculated to impress one with the dignity of his position, to a number of half-terrified boatmen who came to my assistance. And this hospitable Acting Harbour Master, who had suddenly been transferred to that post from the subordinate position of 1st class Tide-waiter, sent a couple of them to guide me to my own private residence which the Commissioner of Customs had very kindly prepared for my reception.

This could only be reached, however, by tramping through a labyrinth of narrow odoriferous streets, where one's trouser-legs seemed to tempt the none-too-fastidious appetites of many hungry dogs, who hailed my arrival with howls of disapproval.

Hoihow is the seaport town of Kiungchow, the capital of Hainan; both of which are open to foreign residents and trade, Kiunchow being the residence of the Taotai, and the seat of the local government which also has jurisdiction over the opposite peninsula of Luchow. Hoihow was opened to foreign trade in August, 1876, and is situated in lat. 20° 3′ N. and long. 110° 19′ E., being the southernmost of all the Treaty ports of China.

The interior of the island is inhabited by aboriginal tribes, known as the wild Loi people, much resembling those of Formosa, especially in their antipathy to the Chinese, to whom they are a constant source of trouble and anxiety. Several military expeditions have of late years been sent out to subdue them, but have always met with ignominious defeat. The chief exports of the island are sugar, sweet-potatoes, rice, tobacco, timber, and pigs; and the imports opium, cotton, and silk goods, kerosine oil, and medicines, The following interesting and instructive report was given of Hoihow by the late Mr. Colin Jamieson (Commissioner of Customs), in 1881:—

"As for the future, it may be assumed with some confidence that the commerce here is capable of substantial augmentation, and, if general tranquillity is maintained, the cultivation of home produce will probably undergo, in course of time, considerable extension, leading—through increased exportation—to wider dealings in commodities from without; while, failing the opening of other Hainan ports, the tendency of trade must be to converge more and more towards Hoihow, as the advantages of carriage of goods by vessels of foreign rather than of native type becomes more generally recognized. Hoihow possesses the further advantage of being close to the mouth of the Pochung-ho, the principal river of Hainan—a stream which, taking its rise in the Limushan, is navigable by boats of 12ins. to 15ins. draught for a distance of some 60 miles from the sea. As an adverse influence, there must, on the other hand, be mentioned the slow but increasing, growth of the mud-flats in the harbour, between the anchorage and the shore, whereby the cargo-boat traffic is restricted to certain states of the tide. It will probably be found necessary at no distant date to take measures to arrest the progress of this

ENTRANCE TO TEMPLE. HOIHOW.

evil. In 1875 the Chinese merchants here subscribed funds for an attempt to restore the channel formerly connecting the neighbouring main river with the upper part of the little stream which runs past Hoihow to the sea, the object being to enable the up-country boats to get to and from the town without having to go round by Baksha. The passage was found to silt up almost as fast as it was dug out, and eventually the work was abandoned, the little that was done sufficing, however, to enable boats of but a few inches draught to get through at the top of high water. A foreign engineer could most likely devise simple means for cutting and maintaining the required channel, and it is very probable that such a work, by increasing the tidal scour through the Hoihow river, would go far towards stopping the silting up of its seaward entrance. But whatever may be the commercial future of the port it is to be feared that it will never prove a very fertile field of enterprise to foreign merchants. The great bulk of the trade is, and will naturally remain, in the hands of the native firms and their Chinese correspondents in Hongkong, through which colony flow the main streams of commerce to and from Hoihow. And as with goods, so with the vessels carrying them; those under foreign flags are, with few exceptions, in Chinese ownership or under Chinese charter, and all arrive at present to Chinese consignment."

Hoihow is celebrated for the manufacture of bamboo ropes and hawsers of great length and stability. These are made in the main thoroughfare which runs through the town parallel with the river. Huge bundles of bamboos are brought in from the surrounding country, each one being then split up into very thin and pliable lengths, which only those belonging to the trade know how to do properly. These thin strips are then twisted into strands, varying in size according to the diameter of the rope or hawser being made. When these strands, with their bamboo yarns, are ready they are fastened to "spinning jennies," placed at both ends of the rope, and the strands turned separately; then they are joined, and the rope spun, one hand helping to screw the rope to its proper tightness by means of a hand-rigged "Spanish windlass."

There were then only twelve foreign residents altogether in Hoihow: and I soon found that life was extremely monotonous

there, especially as they had become morose and sometimes cynical through having been so long bereft of all the more desirable acquisitions of social intercourse, which one urgently needs to make life worth living for in such a world-forgotten wilderness, where the only diversion on a fine day was to visit the inland city of Kiungchow, some five miles distant, which is the centre of the Hainan branch of the American Protestant Mission, begun by Mr. Jeremiassen—acting as independent missionary—in 1881. In 1885 he joined the American mission, and his valuable work became a part of it.

The latter portion of my stay on the island was spent in Kiungchow at the residence of a missionary doctor, who brought me through a second lung attack and abscess. The journey to the capital is generally made in a sedan chair, the cost of hire ranging from 60 cents to one Mexican dollar for the journey there and back, and half that for the single fare.

You step into the chair, close up the screens against all noxious odours, and in ten minutes find yourself clear of the fusty town: being borne along at a swinging pace, the chair shafts resting upon the hard shoulders of two stalwart coolies, who seem to possess a tremendous amount of staying power. Onward they doggedly go, over hill and dale, striding along at a tiring pace, which they often keep up without cessation until arriving at your destination.

For the first three miles the path lies through well cultivated undulating country, and the remaining two miles, after passing the "Five-Palms," as the far-seen landmark is still called, although there are only four trees standing now, the fifth one having been blown down some years ago during a typhoon, through one vastly spacious cemetery. Acres and acres are covered with the Omega-shaped tombs of the rich and the gravemounds of the poor—holding generations and generations of dead and buried Chinese. A few ancient tombs of early Jesuit Fathers, noble and heroic spirits long passed away, men who are remembered yet by the humble country folk for their piety and benevolence, stand amid, and help to consecrate this forest of forgotten graves.

At length you pass through a pretty little green lane with

SOWING SEED.

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A CHINESE PAGODA.

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bamboo, palm, and other tropical vegetation enlivening the way on either side. Then suddenly emerging from this shady avenue, you see the picturesque, creeper-covered walls of Kiungchow—old and magnificent, breathing an air of thought-inspiring antiquity—which are said to have been built over a thousand years ago. These are about 45ft. or 50ft. high, and so broad that we used to ramble and ride four or five abreast on their battlements, looking down on one side upon the little sequestered city, nestling among the broad green trees in the wall-encircled valley below; and on the other, out upon a surpassingly beautiful landscape, with here and there a pagoda, and far away the glittering sea. One indeed, feels far away there, as if living in the days of old.

When I left Hoihow and went to stay with the missionaries in Kiungchow, I told the chair-coolies I wished to go to *yeh-son* Can'ls (Missionary McCandliss). Nodding an assent, they started away at a swinging pace. Soon after entering the east gate of the city, where two large cannons of remote antiquity guarded the passage, they advanced up a fairly broad street, finally turning to the right into a courtyard, and there put me down directly in front of a huge red-painted idol or "joss." It struck me at once they were under the delusion that I had come out on a sight-seeing excursion; and I remonstrated with them rather forcibly, until one of them opened a little wooden side-door to usher me, as I surmised, into the presence of other uncanny monsters.

On entering, however, I was not a little pleasantly surprised to see a pretty flower-decked verandah, fronting a large room whose broad, white-curtained folding doors stood hospitably open; and at which a fair golden-haired European lady—a pleasing and novel sight, indeed!—sat at needle-work, with a bonny little boy playing at her side. I soon learned that this was Mrs. McCandliss, who gave me a most cordial and hearty welcome, which was afterwards repeated by her busy, hard-working husband, the doctor, who took me on a round of inspection when he returned from the Mission Hospital under his able supervision and control.

"You see," he said, "we have made this old Chinese joss-house as tenable as circumstances will allow; but, unfortunately

for us, the Chinese are very averse to any alterations being made by foreigners—*fan quitza*, or "foreign devils," as they call us—as they generally suspect us of evil and unpropitious designs. I had great trouble in gaining their sanction to allow me to put in two bedroom windows upstairs. But I hope we shall soon be able to build for ourselves. We have already bought land, but the Chinese officials have thought proper to build a large powder magazine near where our building operations will commence. That is about the only objection at present; but we must trust to Providence."

"And pray for the well-being of the powder magazine," I ventured to suggest.

Dr. and Mrs. McCandliss and two other families worked very hard, especially Mr. Jeremiassen who was then absent on an itinerating tour in the Loi country where the aborigines were in a religious transition stage: and, like those of Formosa, are said to have partly adopted the Chinese idol worship.

Outside the city of Kiungchow, and facing the western wall, from which a magnificent view of the surrounding country can be obtained, a beautiful and elaborately decorated temple has lately been erected to the much-cherished memory of Su Tung-po the celebrated poet and historian who passed many weary years of exile there, and who was universally loved and respected by the poor people of Hainan, amongst whom he lived, while holding a subordinate office under the Imperial Government, on terms of almost brotherly equality and sympathy

Those were indeed quiet and happy days which I spent in Kiungchow. When I became sufficiently convalescent to get about a little, the kind doctor and his charming young wife used to take me out on picnics and excursions to neighbouring places of interest. Every evening after an early tea they used to have my long cane chair carried up on the grass-covered walls of the city from which the sunset scenes were magnificent. Then while the worthy doctor went off to visit his native patients in the hospital, his wife would read to me. It appeared so strange to be sitting there—away from the world, as it were, in a remote empire—with that beautiful and accomplished American lady. It almost

seemed as if we two had been left behind, or lived again, in some long-forgotten age among the marvels of a remote civilization; or even that we had passed to an existence in some succeeding generation of long futurity. She contrasted so strikingly with our surroundings—with the crumbling walls and ancient buildings—while all around us in the golden stillness of evening lay an old-world scene of surpassing beauty. Beneath us, on the outside of the ivy-clad walls, the narrow road, which skirted the moat for some distance, led away through an avenue of fine trees and across a stretch of park-like country through which a broad stream wended its devious way. Here and there an old pagoda loomed up grim and hoary, or the fantastic roof of a temple or shrine peeped above the bright foliage of clustering trees or graceful bamboos; and away beyond the waves of undulating country—now wooded and now stretching in green pasturelands and fields of rice—the sun would sink slowly down in a purple haze or into the glittering sea.

There are certain episodes in our lives which we never forget, and that was one of the happiest in mine. A calmness used to steal over me as I lay back watching and listening while that fair queen of a world-forgotten city spoke earnestly and sweetly—spoke words which have become indelibly imprinted on my memory. I trust if we never meet again that she may read these words and know that I gratefully remember those brief but hallowed days in old Kiungchow. I often picture the sombre moated walls and romantic scenery, and wonder whether she sits there alone in the twilight now.

For me those crumbling walls what mem'ries hold,
  Of old-world scenes and twilight dreams untold.
I wonder if to-night the sunset rays
  On that archaic temple met her gaze,
Or when they lit the grim pagoda's spire—
  If she stood there to dreamily admire;
And if to her they somehow seemed to cast—
  Just as they lingered on the verge at last—
One furtive look towards the Long Ago
  That twilight world whose spirits haunt us so.

XXIII.—THE POET SU TUNG-PO.

HISTORY repeats itself: and genius is the same under all conditions, though its spirit may dwell in a soul which is imprisoned in the clay-bound cell of a foreign soil. Trouble and adversity and the scourge of tyranny—resulting in imprisonment, disease and exile—seem in all ages to have rather increased than diminished the power and ambition of genius; for loneliness gives it energy. The greatest works have often been created under the most painful and soul-harrowing circumstances. The spirit of true genius rises above and beyond the "meaner satisfactions of life," with its transitory pleasures and pains, to a soul-world of its own. There the soul communes with itself, and this secret intercourse is often productive of the finest work—work which wins a way to immortality.

In support of this thesis I will take a few instances—Baxter wrote a great portion of his "Life and Times" during his confinement in King's Bench Prison; Raleigh, during his confinement in the Tower wrote the "History of the World;" Bunyan created his masterpiece the "Holy War" while lying in Bedford Gaol; and De Foe's "Robinson Crusoe" was produced under similar circumstances. Camoens wrote his "Lusciad" while imprisoned in Macao; Buchanan composed his beautiful "Paraphrases on the Psalms" during his imprisonment in a Portuguese Monastery and Silvio Pellico wrote his celebrated "Memoirs" while incarcerated in a Moravian dungeon. I could name several others of different nationalities, but will appropriately conclude this list with the singularly gifted but persecuted Chinese poet and historian Su

Tung-po. The island of Hainan is full of cherished memories of this great genius who during the Sung dynasty cast a halo of glory about its shores—passing onward unassumingly, immortalized and loved.

Su Tsu-chan, or Su Tung-po, as he was latterly called, was born A. D., 1037 in Szechuen; and his father had won considerable reputation by his literary attainments and held a good Government position. Tung-po was the elder son, and received his early education from a Taouist priest. His father was continually absent, at which times his mother, who is described as having been a most accomplished and cultured lady of great taste and refinement, went through a course of lessons with her two sons which comprised ancient and modern history. She also taught them good moral lessons, training them to loyalty and benevolence.

At the age of nineteen Tung-po married but was soon afterwards left a widower. In his twenty-first year he went up to the capital for his final examination. The examiner was so struck with the excellence of his papers that he suspected him of having gained the assistance of some learned scholar. This was not the case, however, as Tung-po proved at a subsequent examination when he came out an easy first with honours, and was regarded as one of the most promising scholars of that day.

For a few years, during which he again married a very fascinating and well educated young girl named Chao Yun, a native of Chientang near Hangchow, he held a small post under the Government. But at last when the emperor Ying-Tsung, to whom he was already known, succeeded to the throne he was appointed to a more responsible post in the capital. At this time the powerful innovator Wang Ah-Shi recommended numerous reforms. Su Tung-po opposed them, and in reporting on the matter to the Emperor—as one of a commission appointed to do so—he gained the displeasure and finally the enmity of this Wang Ah-Shi and his supporters who formed a very influential party at that time. In consequence Tung-po soon found it advisable to retire from the capital, where things were becoming very unpleasant and even threatening for him, and went to Hangchow where he remained for three years conscientiously discharging the duties of a small office. There he passed his leisure hours in writing

refined poems and reading the classics; and endeared himself to his surroundings by his generous and honest dealings. In fact he was the favourite of rich and poor alike.

He was not, however, allowed by his watchful and vindictive enemies even to rest there. They harried him perpetually, growing more exasperated and revengeful through not being able to find fault with his conduct or to lodge an accusation against him; for he was a man of integrity, sterling to the backbone and of exemplary behaviour.

In the year 1079 he was transferred on promotion to Huchow. On forwarding a memorial of thanks to the Emperor, one of the court censors*—a friend of Wang Ah-Shi's—purposely misconstructed a sentence, making it appear as if Tung-po had made some offensive insinuations against the monarch in his memorial. The unfortunate Tung-po was cast into prison.

After one hundred days confinement he was released and banished to Hangchow where he remained several years. There he wrote some of his finest poems and essays and, as he tells us, "ardently entered into the spirit of the classics."

In the year 1086, at the death of his persecutor Wang Ah-Shi, he was recalled to the capital, pardoned and restored to Imperial favour, shortly afterwards being made, at his humble request, Governor of Hangchow. On leaving for his seat of office he was presented by the Emperor with some magnificent gifts. And the good people of Hangchow—who remembered and loved him still—joyously welcomed him back to the haunts of his earlier days, which he immortalized with his verse. †

In 1093, however, he got into fresh trouble through his writings and was banished to a small city in the province of Kwangtung. During his residence there a subscription was raised for the

* The *censors* are really the historians of the court, and in consequence are much feared.

† Su Tung-po—who was an unrivalled master in subtlety of reasoning and whose eulogistic inscriptions to departed poets and statesmen are singularly beautiful—chiefly excelled in short poems which are contained in one hundred and fifteen volumes. A few of the finest specimens of these may be found in "Gems of Chinese Literature." AUTHOR.

construction of a bridge. Poor Tung-po, like many of his Western brethren of the muse, was always in a chronic state of indigence; he rarely had any ready money, and when he had it all went to creditors. And on this occasion, having the will but not the means, he took off his handsomely clasped rhinoceros belt and gave it as a subscription.

At this period he lost his second wife. This caused him deep grief, for she had been a good and devoted companion from whom, he is said to have drawn much of his inspiration. In the year 1095 or 96 he was banished to Hainan where he was appointed to the post of Sub-Prefect of Changhua, one of the most desolate and dreary parts of the island.

Wherever the poet wandered he dug wells, as he was a great believer in the virtues of pure water, though by no means a teatotaller himself. When staying for a time in Kiungchow he discovered the existence of two springs close together, but of differently flavoured waters, near the north-east gate of the city. Here a monastery was afterwards erected to his memory; and in one of the ruined rooms of this building his likeness—beautifully engraved on a stone tablet let into the wall—may yet be seen.

In his sixty-third year he went to Lenchow, and was shortly afterwards reinstated once more in Imperial favour and was appointed to a high post at Chengtu in his native province of Szechuen. But on his way there he died at Changchow of a disease contracted during his exile in Hainan. Thus ended his nobly-lived life of trouble and vicissitude.

Several letters, written by him during his sojourn in Hainan, between the years 1097 and 1100 A.D., are still kept there, and are in tolerable preservation. I will give the reader a literal translation of the most interesting ones: —

To Yuan Lo, A Graduate and his grand-nephew:

"It is a long time since we have heard from each other, and I do not know whether you are in good health. But my thoughts have always been of the loved ones in Szechuen; and, in answer to your queries, I can only say that your old uncle lives across the seas, as of yore. Lately, however, I have suffered from several ailments and have grown thin and haggard and shall never be

again what I was once. I know not whether, in the long years to come, we shall meet again. After I left Huichow I received no letters for a long time; so you can imagine how lonely I felt in a strange land. Here, in Hainan, we have had bad harvests for several years, consequently there is a great lack of food; and what makes it worse the junks from Canton and Fuhkien have ceased coming, and there are no medicines, etc., I can therefore only resign myself to fate. My son Ko and I sit together like a couple of unhappy priests. But there is that within me which imparts a lightness of feeling and consolation; and I do not change from my old habits. With regard to the epitaph you ask me to write for you—you shall have it if my life is spared a few years more. You, my boy, are of Tung-po's flesh and blood; and you will no doubt be treated with suspicion by the world; therefore, while you are in the metropolis I entreat of you to be on your guard at all times. I have some letters from my pupils in Huichow, but being afraid that Mr. Chien may not pass that way I enclose to you the one addressed to him, and would request you to forward it to its destination at your convenience. In conclusion, above all things be cautious and careful. I have no more to say at present."

ANOTHER TO YUAN LO.

"I have received several letters from you, and they have given me great pleasure and comfort. Really I am most desirous of composing the epitaph, and do not intend to shirk doing it; but troubles and anxieties have crowded around me of late more than ever. Now-a-days I cannot undertake anything without first eating, drinking or conversing—it is all the same. I think you will comprehend my meaning. You shall certainly have it, if death does not overtake me. My hair has turned as white as snow, and I have grown much thinner. I am, however, in fairly good health and retain my appetite. There is not much prospect of our meeting again, and all I trust and pray is that you will work hard and make progress with your studies, and establish a reputation which will reflect credit upon your family. Then I shall be resigned and contented to lay my bones in Hainan."

To Chang Tang-Sao: a Graduate of Kiungchow.

"To-day is clear and bright and most enjoyable. After breakfast I fetched some sweet spring-water from the temple, and am now going to make a cup of the choicest Fuhkien tea. Except you, I feel there is no one to share it with. There was no meat in the market this morning, therefore I can only offer you very plain fare. If you can put up with that, come along at once."

Also to Chang Tang-Sao.

"I hope you are improving in mind and body, for I know not how you are, not having heard from you of late. One never appreciates good health or good fortune until losing it. But I live, dear friend, in the past, and in my writings—for the world and its blissful inspirations is very beautiful after all. I trust you will ever continue to cultivate your talents, that you may become an honour and a blessing to your good family. When you can spare a few hours, come over and let us converse together: for I feel very lonely at times—I am getting old and feeble."

To Chen Sho-yu.

"I hope that you keep good health in this tryingly hot weather. Have you received any definite information respecting the report you sent me? Should it prove true, I shall not be able to start for a fortnight after receiving the official despatch. I should proceed from here by boat direct to Hseu Wen, and from there overland. I do not know whether I shall be able to see you. Wu Tou-yeh has lately arrived from Canton and informs me that Weng and Tsêng have been promoted. I do not know whether this news is authentic. If I can obtain a comfortable house in Lieuchou, I will ask my son and his family to come and live with me permanently. But this world is only a temporary resting-place, so of what use is it in being so particular?

"I had just sealed the above when I received the official despatch ordering me to Lieuchou, and I now write to tell you that I shall be ready to start in ten days. But I must wait for Hsu Chu's

boat which is a strong and seaworthy vessel, while most of the others are dangerous. Hsu is at present absent in some other district: this may detain me somewhat. But I hope to be able to sail on the 25th or 26th. We shall hug the shore for the first day, as far as Shipai, and then if the weather is fine and favourable shall cross over to Tichou. At present the weather is most favourable for an early start. I have written to Mr. Wu, telling him to hire twenty strong bearers to meet me at Tichou."

* * * * * *

On the afternoon of April 18th 1893, after fifteen uneventful months sojourn among the thought-inspiring haunts of that beloved poet, my wife and I went aboard the Danish steamer *Ask* which was taking in a general cargo from Hongkong.

As the sampan, which was to convey us to the ship, pushed off from the landing-stage in front of our house—where we had spent many happy days and where I had done a great deal of literary work, both prose and verse—a large number of the simple-hearted people came down to the waters edge to see us off. Having first loaded us with their little farewell offerings of fruit and joss-sticks, the latter to burn during the passage, they fired off strings of crackers to propitiate and in honour of our departure. My wife was much affected. I felt equally so, but restrained my feelings of sorrow. My little terrier, Dash, had recently had a litter of pups, so I had my hands full to keep the frisky little creatures from falling overboard as the boat was filled to the gunwales with luggage.

At 3,30 a.m., next morning the Customs house-boat came alongside with the clearance papers. The Customs officer stationed aboard—being awakened out of a comfortable sleep—checked off the manifest, signed and sealed it, and left the ship at 4 a.m. Then we hove up the anchor and proceeded out of the harbour—if such it can be called—at full speed, being favoured with fine clear weather, and steering north-by-east past the fishing stakes. At 7 a.m. however, the weather became so foggy that we had to slow down to half-speed, and the course was changed to North-

East-by-East, and again at 8.40 a.m, while crossing the banks, to E. N. E.

IN MEMORIAM.

SS. "Ask", April 2nd 1893.

Eight hundred and two score of years and more
Have passed away, their harvests gathered in
And long consumed; and mighty changes come
To pass about the face of this our home—
Our wand'ring planet in the seas of space.
So much disfigured and so scarred, since when
The star of morning hailed the coming light
Which dawned o'er Meichou in far Szechuen;
Bringing no better tidings to the folk,
Who now arose to welcome coming day,
Than that which most concerned the "Elder Su"
To whom a babe was born.—Good news enough!
Although no heralds loud proclaimed the fact;
For to the land a noble child was born;
A son, whose fame and fortitude would live
Thro' happy days of proud prosperity,
As favoured guest at many stately courts;
Thro' joyless years of exile, unto death—
And still thro' countless ages yet to come—
As "Cathays" poet and historian—

Poor Su Tung-po!

Captain Revsbeck, who is an old China-coast captain, and who was then in very ill health, went up on the bridge immediately the weather became foggy; and at 9 a.m. put the ship at full speed again, slightly altering the course. On asking him why he remained on the bridge when he was so ill and weakened by lung disease and dysentery, and why he allowed the ship to go so fast is such confusingly thick weather, he manfully replied "I would sooner stand here and honourably die at my duty, than leave this bridge in such weather. I am an old fellow now, and my time must come sooner or later. But we *must* go *full speed*, or it would be impossible to avoid being hopelessly drifted about and perhaps run aground by the treacherous tides."

In spite of the dense fog, he seemed to know, as if by instinct,

the exact position of his ship; for when the Chinese pilot*—who was also on the bridge—gave the order to resume an east-north-easterly course, he said "No, no, pilot,—we are just about half way from Hainan Head to the Mid-Channel buoy." He was right.

During a conversation with Captain Revsbeck concerning the new channel buoys and the dangers of navigation in those waters, he remarked. "They really ought to place a bell-buoy on the Little Bank, which bears South-half-west from the Pochin Hill Pagoda landmark. So that in a fog vessels, hearing the bell-buoy ringing, could go into shallow water and anchor. But round the bank it is hard and very dangerous to do so owing to the strong currents and depth of water, which averages from twenty-seven to twenty-eight fathoms. I hope they will soon put one there as it is really a very dangerous and universally dreaded place."

Throughout the day we were favoured with fine clear weather and smooth sea. But as evening closed in the weather became very thick and decidedly bad for navigation. But onward the "Ask" went at half-speed; and at 1 a. m., changed her course to north-east, steering for the Ladrone Islands—a celebrated haunt of pirates in the olden days. At 3 a. m. we got amongst the Lochoo-Islands; and it was really wonderful to see the deliberate manner in which our experienced old skipper kept three-quarter speed on the ship and—in a fog which had now become intense—ran right up to within a couple of ships lengths of some of these islands and then backed away to again forge ahead for the next one: thus feeling his way through an intricate maze of rock-girt islands. I certainly admired and respected his confidence and skill.

We arrived at our anchorage in Hongkong next afternoon, after a very pleasant passage diversified at frequent intervals by the long sleep-confounding blasts of the whistle.

* Chinese pilots are generally old fishermen who have cruised about in the neighbourhood from childhood. They are often the most reliable men, especially in thick weather.

HONGKONG FROM KOWLOON.

XXIV.—A RAMBLE IN HONGKONG.

HONGKONG, or "Fragrant Streams", lies between 22° 9′, 22° 1′, North Latitude, and 114° 5′, 115° 18′ East Longitude, and is one of several islands situated near the South-Eastern coast of China, and at the mouth of the Pearl River—eighty-two miles south-west of Canton, and thirty seven miles east of Macao, with a length of about ten miles and a breadth of from three to four miles—its area being thirty square miles.

It is the emporium of British Trade with China, and the distributing centre of Far Eastern commerce; its principal imports being opium, flour, sugar, oil, earthenware, woolen and cotton goods, sandalwood, (the latter coming from Western Australia) vegetables, grain and livestock. The transactions in the silk and tea trades in South China are also chiefly controlled by firms in Hongkong.

During the hostilities in 1840 and 41 *which ensued from the action of the Chinese authorities at Canton to suppress the Opium Trade*, the harbour of Hongkong was used by the British Fleet and its transports. The island was partially ceded to Great Britain in a convention entered into between Captain Elliot R. N. and the Chinese General, Ki Shan, in 1841.

After the resumption of hostilities, a treaty was signed at Nankin, in 1842, in which, Hongkong was declared as fully relinquished to the British; and on April 5th 1843 was erected into the full status of a Crown Colony by an Order in Council. The official occasion of taking position on the island is mentioned by Sir Edward Belcher, in his "Voyage of H. M. S. Sulphur", thus:—

"We landed on Monday the 25th January 1841, at fifteen minutes past eight a.m., and being the *bona fide* possessors, Her Majesty's health was drunk with three cheers on Possession Mount. On the 26th the squadron arrived; the marines were landed, the Union Jack hoisted on our post, and formal possession taken of the Island by Commodore Sir J. G. Bremer, accompanied by the other officers of the squadron, under a *feu-de-joie* from the marines and the Royal Salute from the ships of war. On the Kowloon peninsula were situated two batteries, which might have commanded the anchorage, but which appeared to be but thinly manned; these received due notice to withdraw their men and guns, as agreed by the late treaty."

The colony presents a very picturesque and imposing appearance on entering the harbour—the background of tawny green mountains, and the white-coloured European residences rising in terraces, one above the other, on its steep slopes. Of an evening the effect is remarkably magnificent—when all the lights of these houses glimmer and twinkle, illuming with myriads of bright stars, like fairy lamps, the dark mountain side, up which they creep—growing gradually lesser and smaller—until the beacon-crowned summit is reached.

I landed in Hongkong in the evening when all was brightly lit up by electric light; and if the reader will, in imagination, accompany me on a ramble through the city, I shall be most happy to traverse the distance again as his guide.

We go ashore from the steamer in a long and somewhat narrow sailing *sampan*, commanded by an old Chinese woman who steers the craft, and manned by her children who are taught to pull an oar and handle the sails almost from the day of their birth. For they are bred and brought up aboard the *sampan* which is a family heirloom—and there they pass all the days of their life, twice a day going ashore to the market.

On landing at Pedders Wharf, we are surrounded by chair and ricksha coolies whom we gently disperse with a few judiciously bestowed raps from our sticks, and are allowed to pass forward across the Bund which is faced by rows of tall buildings, more roomy and comfortable than of architectural beauty. These are

the offices of the wealthy merchantile firms whose steamers plough the Eastern seas from the Gulf of Pechili to the Tonquin Gulf. But these offices are closed at this hour, as the *hong* men—or *taipans*, as the Chinese call them—go home at 4 p.m.: many of them living over the water on the mainland at Kowloon. Between there and Hongkong, lines of smart passenger launches run continually. Other residents, especially during the hot summer months, reside upon the Peak which is reached by an almost perpendicular tramway constructed by Mr. Bowdler, an eminent and skilled engineer who is now supervising and controlling, as Engineer-in-Chief, the important and difficult work of reclaiming, filling-in and draining a large portion of the harbour; the reclaimed ground being divided into building lots, which will greatly add to the imposing appearance of the colony. I have unfortunately mislaid my last interesting letter from this highly respected, and eminently clever gentleman, or I should take the liberty of quoting a portion to show the gigantic proportions of the work he is carrying out. A large part of the Western section of Hongkong has lately been redrained under the supervision of Mr. Bidgood, Foreman Engineer of the Public Works Department of whom—like his hard-working chief—the Colony may well be proud, for a more trustworthy and zealous servant could hardly be found. On one occasion, during a heavy typhoon, and at the imminent risk of losing his life, he descended at midnight into one of the large drains under repair which had not been properly shored up by the Chinese contractor and in consequence endangered some buildings which threatened to fall at any moment. For hours during the worst of the storm and with a rushing torrent around him he nobly worked there—thus saving many lives and much valuable property.

The clock in the Bell Tower facing us, with its illuminated dial, now strikes eight as we enter the Hongkong Hotel for the purpose of booking rooms. What an immense place it is! and how lofty. Apartments here cost a trifle—six dollars per diem—a trifle more than one can generally afford for any length of time. These elaborate pillars, panels, traceries and statues mean weighty capital heavily sunk.

"This way, sars—loom hundred-forty—look out—get in, sars—*haiya!*"

A polite Celestial, indeed! He nearly took my breath away when he shoved us on this concern and we started for the roof. I don't like these lifts—too much of a hurry altogether for the Far East. These rooms are comfortable enough, though—and so they ought to be. We will take a stroll by moonlight—by electric light, I should say, for the streets are simply flooded with the weird illuminant which plays on a panorama of stately abodes and hongs of merchant princes. These lofty and inaccessible-looking buildings seem to have quite trampled to dust the homelier looking shanties of the early sailing-ship days. What a busy crowd, too, ever moves along! Velvet-lined chairs with starred and striped bearers, fair ladies; old men walking, young swells riding, and men-of-war sailors rattling recklessly along in rickshas; and dirty vagrants selling the sweetest of flowers from Canton.

"Wantchee button-hole, sir?"

"No thanks—can't afford such adornments." There is very little money about the colony just at present—it has all gone in the bogus companies, flying lots, and "salted" gold and silver mines. That is why everybody you meet looks so anxious—very different from the old Prosperous days when the financial foundations of these halls were laid.

Why the place seems over-run with Portuguese!—They almost crowd one off the pavement. It is about time a stop was put to this wholesale emigration from Macao. But I suppose it is no use bringing new laws into force—Macao must be empty—left with its one half-forgotten redeeming point—the statue of Camoens who wrote his "Lusciad" there. They have left that city, vulgarly speaking, "bottom up"—and have taken a "hand", or "chipped in" as I heard someone remark, to gamble this city away—to reduce it to its primeval state of "granite stones, empty bottles and cigar-ends."

The thoroughfares are certainly most creditably kept, one doesn't have to tuck his dress-trousers into sea-boots now or walk and tumble over plank bridges. We wont trouble about climbing up and down the hilly tiers of streets to-night—we may as well keep straight along the Queen's Road—which is the Regent street of the Orient—on a smooth easterly course which leads to "Happy Valley"

where, the Europeans are buried in a beautiful garden of tombs and flowers. There is not much fear of being robbed when those great strapping British,and tall fierce-looking Sikhs and keen if somewhat diminutive Chinese policemen—some carrying carbines, cutlasses and revolvers, are patrolling this broad well-lighted road.

The Chinese police or *lukongs* are much feared by the poorer class of native inhabitants from whom they frequently contrive to extort money. The unnecessary and uncalled-for brutality of the general *lukong*, has long been known and patiently tolerated by the poor and comparatively helpless class of Chinese itinerant hawkers—especially the sugar-cane venders. A striking instance of this kind was brought to my notice one evening, when a poor wretched looking coolie, probably with a wife and family dependent on his small earnings, had placed his little portable stall at the side of the road in D'Aguilar Street. He was trying to sell a few pieces of sugar-cane when suddenly a *lukong* came along, upset the contents of the stall in the road, and for some minutes indulged in a little of what he thought sport by dragging the unfortunate proprietor about by the *queue*, and then hustling him off to the police station.

Now we pass the magnificent building occupied by the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, with its lofty domed-roof, the ceiling of which is of a pale azure colour with golden stars. Further on stands a large fountain and the splendidly constructed buildings comprising the Chamber of Commerce, Museum and theatre of which Hongkong may justly be proud. Now we are beginning to enter old Hongkong, the familiar tree-shaded parts beyond which are the barracks. On our left is the well-kept Cricket Ground—in old times the Public Recreation Ground.

We pause here a while, leaning against the palings—and listen to the excellent band of the Shropshire Regiment playing across the way there at the officers' mess. Somebody might confer a great boon on the public by placing a few seats at convenient and unobtrusive spots—say under the trees on the east side of Murray Road, or somewhere in this vicinity, as numbers of residents come here in the pleasant summer evenings to hear the music.

There must be something peculiarly attractive about this little

Far Eastern colony. For I have noticed that after a man has lived here a few years, although he may then leave, and be absent parhaps for almost a lifetime—he generally comes back again sooner or later, and settles down for the rest of his days.

The band stops playing at nine o'clock, so now we will retrace our steps, repass the hotel, and take a walk along the more lively western part of the settlement. How cool and refreshing this night breeze is!—Better to hear the reposeful rustling of the tall trees overhead than the rumbling of the cabs, trams and trains ever heard in western lands. How quiet it is becoming—just the time for a walk—the very time to view Hongkong peacefully nestling under the shadow of those majestic hills whence the lights glimmer like meteors, so high are the houses above us.

As we enter the western half of Queen's Road, which runs parallel with the harbour frontage, the shops become almost exclusively Chinese, and the quaint signboards and paper lanterns begin to show themselves. Here and there are a few "rum-mills" whence the sounds of loud and discordant music and the bustling and clatter of feet proceed—evidently to the entire satisfaction of poor Jack ashore who is there gracefully fleeced of his hard earned pay to the tune of fantastic music.

Now we come to a Chinese theatre—the celebrated Kow Shing theatre into which numbers of smiling-faced sons of Han and their comely ladies are crowding. We may as well enter with them. On the left-hand side of the doorway is the ticket office enclosed by wooden bars and wire lattice-work. Seats in the gallery, part of which is reserved for ladies, cost from 50 cents to $ 1, and those in the lower part or body of the theatre from 10 to 25 cents. You pay your money, receive a red ticket, and pass into the well-filled house. You can sit where you like—on the back of a seat if it suits you, and everybody is agreeable. Some prefer to go and sit on the stage near the actors. The building is square shaped—somewhat resembling a chapel, with the galleries on either side and facing the stage which occupies the same position as ours, but has no curtain of scenery—these are quite unknown in a Chinese theatre. City walls, mountains, temples, palaces, fortifications furniture and other objects are represented by chairs.

ENTRANCE TO A YAMEN.

while many of the scenes are delineated by pantomimic attitudes and motions.

As my learned friend, Mr. Stanton, of Hongkong writes:—"Their scenery is inferior to what ours was, at the Cockpit and Globe theatres in Shakspere's time, and about equal to Peter Quince's scenery in his 'most lamentable comedy and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisby,' as shown in the 'Midsummer Nights Dream', where a man with loam over him represents a wall and his spread open fingers a cranny for lovers to whisper through. The orchestra, which through the ear-splitting nature of its music, is the great hindrance to foreigners enjoying a play, occupies the rear-central part of the stage between the doorways leading to the green-room. This green-room is an interesting place, full of strange things and stranger looking people, of arms, and armour of every period of Chinese history except the last 200 years, of hideous masks, and beards of various colours, of richly embroidered robes and patched rags, and so on. One dirty looking fellow dons imperial robes and flowing beard and struts the stage a full-blown Emperor, another slips on embroidered robes and long moustache and is transformed into a sapient Minister of State, another daubs his cheeks with paint, puts on a coiffure, a lady's dress and tiny shoes and totters about a golden-lilied princess; and so on with all the rest—gods, genii, heroes and villains. They make up very clevery, especially the men who impersonate females."

A few of the leading lights of the Chinese stage receive salaries ranging from 5000 to 9000 dollars per annum, and the lesser ones from 600 to 1200 dollars a year. But their life is not altogether a very enviable one; and most of them are confirmed opium smokers. Unlike our actors they are looked down upon and despised, and can never rise to any position, however clever they may be.

At half past eleven we come out of the theatre, after spending a couple of hours most enjoyably in the battles and love scenes of some bygone dynasty. Now we will return home.

What a transformation Queen's Road has undergone within an hour or two! Before, all was bustle—now, all is silent and quiet, save for the occasional regulation thief-warning tramp of a policeman,

or the voice of a chair or ricksha coolie soliciting a fare. But hark—what is that sharp note, as of a castinet? That sound somehow seems familiar to me. Ah, yes—poor creatures, here they come. A young girl—a "sing-song" girl, walking hand-in-hand and chatting pleasantly with an aged woman. Both are blind—the blind leading the blind; but the poor creatures seem happy—happier indeed and more contented than most of their sex you meet. Hongkong by night would not be complete without its poor blind nightingales.

Hullo! what's that bell ringing for? I thought so—here they come dashing along. FIRE! fire! Stand aside please. All right constable—good night. We are not in for this sport—we shall see it all and a great deal more in to-morrow's papers. There goes a poor reporter for copy—buttoning his clothes over his pyjamas.

One night, when a great conflagration was in full blaze, and the shore and floating engines were all in use, an event occurred which was nearly the cause of another fire, perhaps of a worse nature. A sergeant of the police on entering a Chinese house to seize some opium, about which he had evidently got information, found congregated there a large party of gamblers who, in their desperate hurry to escape, knocked over two kerosine lamps, leaving the sergeant to fight the flames which he accomplished successfully in place of arresting the gang of rascals.

XXV.—AN INTERESTING CASE.*

FEW people, not even our zealous missionaries, who dwell in the central quarter of Hongkong, especially the wealthier portions of the community, know or have any adequate idea how some of the poorer people inhabiting the outlying districts east and west of them live or, more properly speaking, manage to exist—which is very often a puzzle to themselves; or what sort of people they are who do actually exist there. No doubt some imagine they know all about it, others make a few half-hearted inquiries, while the large majority rarely condescend to give this distasteful subject a thought; and if the thought comes, they ignominiously dispel it as bearing no affinity to their business. Most of the residents know where the Jewish fraternity all herd together in the good old Mesopotamian style—clustering about their headman; and where the Parsees, Mahomedans, and Armenians live happily on first floors, using the ground floors for opium godowns, while they eternally up-end the "Almighty Dollar." We know all about these worthy people, except their own business, which, unlike most men, they mind themselves. The Chinese live all about the European residents, and we pretend to know all about their funny little ways, and characteristics, and even write about them. While "John's" wee ferret eyes unceasingly blink—for he knows we know nothing at all—at least nothing of any importance.

I do not say that Hongkong is the only place where this uncharitable ignorance exists, for even in Shanghai with all its

* This originally appeared as a letter in the *Hongkong Daily Press* and at the time excited a correspondence altogether too voluminous to include in this work.

philanthropists and charitable institutions, and its well endowed missions, is exactly the same—if not more ignorant in this respect. As an instance of this, I will, before proceeding further, open the eyes of some by relating a sad event which took place in Shanghai some six or seven years ago. There was one general reporter, on the staff of a well-known journal there, named Thomas Marshall, who was of an eminently respectable old English family, his father being, I believe, a colonel in the army. Now Marshall, who was a well-educated and gentlemanly fellow and a smart writer—when he chose to wield the quill—used to suffer from periodical attacks of ebriety, at which times be became very irregular in his habits and failed to adequately perform his duties. So he was discharged; and most people knew, or made it their business to find out, why. Give a dog a bad name and it will stick to him, above all places it will stick fastest in Shanghai. Consequently the unfortunate ex-reporter was unable to obtain any further employment. He had not sufficient money to leave the Settlement—and he was too proud to beg or even to write home. I myself used to frequently see him of a morning going from one *hong* to another along the Bund—on the alert for any vacancy which *might* (but never would) occur for *him*.

After a time I quite lost sight of him, and, concluding that he must have left the Settlement, I thought no more about him. Months passed away and at length I left Shanghai for the North of China. Some three years afterwards a paragraph in a Shanghai paper caught my eye. It was a brief account of the death of poor Marshall—it was a glaring proof of the injustice that had been done him. It recalled very forcibly to my mind the words of Juvenal:

> "Want is the scorn of every wealthy fool,
> And wit in rags is turned to ridicule."

His untimely death was indeed a stern reproach to the foreign community of Shanghai, by whom it ought not to be forgotten; and also a stern warning to young men leaving England to take up positions in our far eastern colonies.

It appeared from the evidence of a ricksha coolie, his last

friend on earth, that the poor fellow had tried everywhere but failed to obtain employment of any kind. He soon ran short of money, and rather than also run into debt—as many would have pardonably done—he quietly moved into a small room, a miserable little hole in a Chinese house in China-town. There he used to write some of his clever articles and essays, most of which were returned to him, with those well-known words "declined with thanks and regrets." He never complained to anyone; and when he was seen, he was always dressed respectably and even carefully; and he always smiled and nodded pleasantly to those whom he knew—those who had claimed his friendship when he was in better circumstances. He grew perceptibly thinner, though—thin from want of proper food. The beautiful part of this painful story comes in here.

Poor Marshall was always kind and gentle—of a gentle, sensitive nature; and was friendly and considerate to everybody even down to his Chinese "boy," who, strange to relate, became really devoted to him. When the master left the staff of the newspaper, the servant followed him and, although he knew that his master had not money to pay him wages, he waited on him and lived with him, and they went down the hill together. The boy also tried to obtain work as both his master and he had not food to eat. He was equally unfortunate. At last he managed to hire a ricksha, and turned ricksha-coolie.

Marshall grew weaker and thinner, and latterly was not able to leave the hovel in which they lived—so his maintenance fell entirely upon the faithful "boy" whose small earnings were sometimes hardly sufficient to give them congee—still he managed somehow to pay for the room and give his master some food to eat. But the poor friendless fellow grew weaker and weaker, and at last was not able to eat the rice given him. In this dire extremity he sent a polite letter to one of his countrymen in the Settlement, asking him to kindly send him a plate of soup, as he was very ill and unable to get out. The proud foreigner did not respond or deign to reply to this urgent and final appeal. A few days afterwards—in one of the richest and proudest communities in he world—and on the very doorstep, as it were, of princely

merchants, as far as riches are concerned, poor Thomas Marshall died of starvation. The matter was hushed up; and the benevolent foreigners rewarded the ricksha coolie with 200 dollars and set him up in business; and the verdict returned at the inquest, was that the deceased had died of "general debility—accelerated through want of proper nourishment."

Having narrated this instance, I will now pick up the thread of my discourse where I left it—leaving those who doubt the veracity of my assertions, to turn over the files of old Shanghai papers of 88 or 89. Most residents in Hongkong have heard about the proverbial "beachcomber," and know that such beings do actually exist there. How they live, what they are like, whither they come, and how they became what they are, is not of much concern or interest. Many people imagine that every disorderly or oddly dressed and dissipated looking merchant seaman is one of these unfortunate creatures. But they are much mistaken, for the genuine "beachcomber" is very rarely seen—except early in the morning or late in the evening. Even then he generally shuns his fellow men, except when driven by want to ask alms: then he slinks out into one of the larger thoroughfares and keeps along close to the wall, until he sees a person in better circumstances than himself. Then he darts to his side and, with head bent, stammers out almost incoherent words, which sound like a muttered prayer or a curse. He receives a coin, and is gone—seen no more. The question is, cannot something be done for these poor wretches? I have talked it over with the authorities, consuls and police when I tried to get a man an order to the Sailors Home for a night's lodging, and the only satisfaction I got was "Lock him up as a vagrant—put him in gaol."

Some time ago, during one of my evening rambles through the western district of Hongkong about Taipinshan—the Seven Dials or Ratcliff Highway of China—I saw a strange and awful looking creature, hardly human in appearance, slink out of a dirty alley way and stand gazing absently up and down the gloomy thoroughfare. I will endeavour to describe his appearance. He was of medium height, with back almost bent into a hunch as he stooped forward with rounded shoulders and bowed head; his hair was matted and

PICKING PADDY.

so long that it reached below the shoulders in a tangled mass; his face was of a ghastly yellowish-white colour, and his dark eyes sunk into their blueish sockets. He wore an old felt hat with the brim partly worn away, an old tattered overcoat covered the filthy rags beneath, and his blistered feet were enclosed in a pair of time-worn dancing-pumps that were tied to his feet with pieces of rag and string.

I stopped before the poor wretch, and asked him who he was and where he lived. He stood still, and gazing blankly up and down the street, did not take any notice whatever, and seemed quite oblivious of my presence. After putting further questions and eliciting no reply, I took hold of his arm and shook it. He suddenly raised his head, and with a wan smile on his half-daft face, asked what I wanted with him. I told him I should like to help him, if he would only tell me about himself.

"No, no; no help!" was all he said, as he again hung his head. It was with the greatest difficulty that I prevailed on him to articulate a few words, and then I could hardly understand what he said or meant. At last I gave him to understand that I wished him to come to my house next morning. I wrote the address down, and then, as he nodded an assent, left him standing there gazing with an unmeaning smile at the envelope which I had put in his hand.

Next morning at about 10 a.m. I heard an usual commotion in the street. Thinking it was some one being escorted to the police station, I got up and went on the verandah. Who should I see but the poor wretch I had met the previous night, walking rapidly along up the centre of the street followed by hundreds of yelling Chinese. He seemed to take no notice of them whatever; but—with back hunched, and head bowed—came doggedly along, straight to the house and entered the front-door. Inviting him into the kitchen, I asked him to sit down. I then managed after a time, with the assistance of my wife, to make him speak. I learned that he was a French-American born in California; that he came out to China a year back, as second cook of the steamer *Gaelic* from San Francisco; that he had tried to obtain work and had failed, that he had tried to leave Hongkong, but

was unable; that for months he had not shown himself in the day time, being ashamed of his wild appearance, having no money to improve it, and no friends; that he slept anywhere and very often in the woods on the sides of the hills, and lastly that his name was Sams—and that he very much wished to obtain employment as cook or watchman anywhere.

I took him out and at last got a barber to cut his year's growth of hair; then I sent him to have a bath, and finally rigged him up in a clean suit of flannel clothes, boots and hat. And lo—he was another being! I hardly knew him as the same man. I then gave him a good meal, and, when he was satisfied, talked seriously and sensibly to him. When he left my house, he carried himself erect, created no sensation and looked respectable, infinitely more so than many; and that blank imbecile look had faded from his face. I took him to the Central Police Station to make inquiries about him. None of the Europeans there had ever seen him before and his reputation was clean. Then I sent him with a letter to the American Consul, who politely informed me that he was unable to help the man; the master of the Sailor's Home said the same: and in spite of my earnest entreaties, nothing was done for him. I endeavoured to obtain a berth for him aboard the American ship *Martha Davis*, but was equally unsuccessful.

Shortly afterwards, on making inquiries about this unfortunate man, I found out that since he had been dressed decently and had been presentable enough to appear in the streets and, as I advised look for employment, he had been pounced upon by the police and imprisoned as a vagrant because he had no "visible means of support" or some other equally plausible excuse. How can these poor outcasts better their position when no one will give them work, and there is no institution provided for them? They must either hide away in any filthy den or venture out and be captured and imprisoned amongst criminals—and treated like dogs rather than human beings, simply because they have no money, no home, and no friends. If a man commits the error of running away from his ship—which is perhaps a floating hell—is he to be deprived of again returning to his native land and of living respectably amongst his fellow men? I have seen so much of the miseries

of these so-called "beachcombers" that I consider it is quite time that something is done for them. Under the present *regime* in our colonies, if a man runs away from his ship, or fails to leave in the one selected for him, he is cast out of the Sailors Home to beg, be imprisoned—or die in the gutters—perhaps even deprived of the last few charitable offices extended by all nations and people to those who are passing "beyond the shadow."

XXVI.—A VISIT TO CANTON.

AS the reader may require a change of air after the last somewhat melancholy chapter, and as almost everybody who goes to China makes a point of visiting Canton, I propose making a trip there by the pleasantest route, that is by water.

At half.past seven a. m., after a light breakfast of frog-curry—which is considered a delicacy out there—flavoured with excellent Penang chutney, we hurry off to the Praya to catch the eight o'clock boat. If we missed that we should have to wait until 5 p. m., as only two (Canton) steamers leave Hongkong daily.

We soon catch sight of the Hongkong and Macao Steamship Company's swift boat. It is a yellowish coloured American built vessel which looks like a floating three-storyed house with numerous doors and windows reaching the entire length of the ship. Protruding above the upper deck is a huge crank somewhat resembling in shape a gigantic hand-pump.

A continuous stream of intending passengers passes up the gangway; and as we gain the crowded deck our nose is assailed by a variety of uncommon odours—uncommon I say because they are peculiarly "Celestial," or in other words confined to the peoples and places of the "Celestial Empire"—combining a selection of noisome scents distilled from hay-like tobacco, opium, unwashed humanity, garlic, dried seaweed, *samshoo*, fish and divers other commodities of daily life. Each Chinese passenger carries a netted basket filled with old pots, pans, bowls, cups, remnants of the last meal and all manner of garbage—not forgetting a small stone or wooden pillow somewhat similar in shape and size

INTERIOR OF A TEMPLE. CANTON.

to a brick. This article is always placed ready for immediate use; for directly John has completed his arrangements for the passage he spreads his mat on the deck and lies down, resting his neck upon this hard but serviceable pillow.

A Chinaman never leaves anything behind him when changing his residence: only that which can he removed by hard scrubbing—not even a broken bottle or pot. He crams them in among his personal effects. Before leaving he actually lifts the dirty earthenware rice-pot off the stove, with a crust of burnt rice lining the inside, and carefully deposits it among his other goods and chattels.

Now the whistle sounds and the huge crank above us begins to move up and down. The paddles revolve and the vessel slowly leaves the wharf. Making our way to the upper-deck we pass out of the confusion and smell to quietude, cleanliness and fresh-air. On the saloon deck we meet the skipper who is sure to be a jolly good fellow who insists upon our having a "whisky-and-soda" with him—or a "peg" which means the same or similar refreshment.

The following extract, written many years ago, will give the reader a good idea of the scenery met with during a river journey to Canton.

"On leaving Hongkong the steamer threads its way through the shipping, presenting to the passengers a capital panoramic view of the terraced city of Victoria, daily climbing higher up the sides of the Peak, until, shortly before reaching the extreme western limit of the Island, its course is directed towards the narrow channel, between the western end of the Island of Lam Tao and a small islet, which gives access to the mouth of the Canton River. The scenery at this point is well worth studying. The harbour of Hongkong, with its numerous beauties, and the broad expanse of isle-dotted sea beyond, are left astern, whilst the steamer glides in water usually of glassy smoothness between the rocky shores of the narrow channel, upon which the only sign of life or population is perhaps a solitary fisherman hauling his curiously constructed lever-net to the bank, or the crew of a passing boat offering the sacrifice of lighted joss-paper to a tiny shrine erected on the jutting angle of the rock.

The short grasses covering the rugged surface of the granite glow at almost all seasons, with colours of peculiar richness, from a deep purple to tender yellow, forming a carpet the tints of which are interrupted here and there by boulders of fantastic form and ombre hue, or relieved by delicate groups of the feathery bamboo, flourishing in some nook in which a few inches of soil have been formed by the disintegration of the granite. A solitary hamlet, the only one visible in a distance of at least thirty miles, may be seen occupying the strand at the Northern extremity of the sland on the right hand. This absence of population along the shores of the river is due as much to the lawless nature of the people as to the barreness of the soil. The villages which exist along the course of the river are for the most part planted at the head of secluded creeks and bays, where greater opportunities of defence against hostile attack or of withdrawal from the action of authority are presented. The deserted aspect of the shore becomes particularly noticeable as the steamer proceeds, coasting under the rugged cliffs which rise from the eastern bank, whilst on the left hand the channel rapidly expands into the broad estuary, the prospect being only bounded on the left hand by the rugged promontories of Lam-tao, which are usually shrouded in dense masses of rolling mist. As the steamer passes on, the island of Ling-ting is seen in mid-channel, and is pointed out as the place of anchorage for the opium ships in days when traffic in the drug was contraband. Large numbers of fishing boats dot the broad expanse, and at every shoal the stakes to which their nets are attached are seen protruding from the water. Three hours after leaving Hongkong, after accomplishing a distance of about fifty miles, the Bogue is approached, the bay and fort of Chuen-pe being first passed on the left hand. The fortifications of A-nung-hoy Point are the first that attract attention, consisting in a long range of granite masonry pierced with embrasures for guns at the water level, with a wall running up the cliff in a semi-circle as a protection from attack in rear. The shattered blocks of granite still lie as they were driven from their places by the guns of the British squadron in 1856. Abreast of this fortification lie the North and South Wang-tong, or Bar-the-way Islands, completely encir-

A VILLAGE OF BOATS, CANTON.

cled with granite batteries, which, however are in no better condition than those of the main. The defensive position is completed by the batteries on Tiger Island, lying a little further on, to the left hand in ascending. This island, a remarkable mass of rounded granite with precipitous sides, rising to a height of about 400 feet, takes its name from a resemblance, fancied by the Chinese, to a tiger's head. Europeans discover, on the contrary, a well defined elephant's head and trunk formed by a declivity about the centre of the island. Others declare that, if it must be known by the name of some animal, it should be called *Bare* Island.

Once inside the Bogue, the banks of the river become more clearly defined, and assume the character of alluvial flats, richly cultivated with rice and sugar-cane. The steamer's course, which hitherto has been on the whole northerly, is turned to the west shortly after passing on the right a range of hills surmounted by a prominent land mark known as the Second Bar Pagoda (from the existence at this point of shallows known as the Second Bar), and the masts of the foreign shipping at Whampoa are shortly descried. The scenery surrounding this anchorage, consisting of low, wooded hills, is extremely picturesque, but the aspect of the Chinese village, fitly denominated Bamboo Town, opposite which the steamer stops for a minute or two is repulsive beyond description. As the first view of purely Chinese habitations, the dilapidated and decaying tenements erected on piles along the shore usually inspire unmitigated disgust. Some amusement may be derived from watching the deft manner in which the boatmen and boatwomen of Whampoa manage their sampans, which crowd in a dense mass around the steamer, in the midst of a Babel of vociferations, and seem to escape by a daily miracle the peril of swamping beneath the still-revolving paddles."

For wealth, magnificence and naturally advantageous position, Canton—or more correctly speaking, Kwang-chow-foo—may be classed among the most famous cities in the "Middle Kingdom," and, owing to its commercial relations and many attractions in the way of temples, pagodas and curioes, the most noted among other nations.

This far-famed emporium stands on the nothern bank of the

Cheu Kiang or Pearl River, in the province of Kwangtung—hence its designation among foreigners, the word Canton being a corruption of the name of the province by the earliest Portuguese and English residents; and is situated in Lat 23° 7′ 10″ N and Long 113° 14′ 30″ East, being bound on the north by the provinces of Hunan, Kwang-si and Kiang-si, on the north by Fuhkien and on the east and south by the sea.

In consequence of its favoured position the traffic of other countries was directed to it at a very early period; and as far back as the tenth century after Christ it was regarded as one of the principal centres of commerce in the Far East. At that time the Arabian navigators traded between there and the ports of Western Asia; and to this day there exist several monumental relics of their time in the shape of Muslim structures and followers of Mahommed. One of the most notable of the former is the Mohammedan Mosque and Minaret—known to the Chinese as the Kwang T'ap or Bare Pagoda which was built by the early Arabian traders A. D. 850, and stands in the Tartar quarter of the city, a little to the southward of the crumbling Tah Yah or "Flowery Pagoda."

The mosque is a plain and simple structure consisting of a large hall, the roof of which is supported by ordinary Chinese pillars; while the white-washed walls are only relieved from their severe simplicity by a few texts from the Koran. The floor is of stone covered with matting; and the only article of furniture is a rude altar upon which stands a tablet inscribed with an invocation to the great "Lord of Ten-Thousand-Times-Ten-Thousand-Years."

The origin of the mosque is denoted by the shape of the arches that form two sides of the structure, close to which stands a circular tower or minaret which rises to a height of 130 feet, gradually decreasing in diameter until the first story is reached, from there the tower takes a much smaller calibre. Some bushes and a tree have grown out of the platform of the first story which used to be reached by a spiral staircase in the interior, but owing to its ruinous condition the entrance was blocked up some forty years ago.

In the sixteenth century the Portuguese, who were the pioneers

THE KWANG TAP OR BARE PAGODA. CANTON.

of European commerce in the Far East, found their way to Canton, the navigator Fernas Peres de Andrade being the first to arrive there. They were followed a century later by the Dutch who in turn were succeeded and supplanted by the English who, in the seventeenth century, opened commercial transactions with the Chinese Close Corporation, organized for that purpose—our trade being conducted by the East India Company whose agents had already traded further up the coast at Amoy and in the adjacent island of Formosa. A factory was established at Canton, and commercial transactions were carried on with remarkable success, and to the entire satisfaction of both parties, for a period of one hundred and fifty years: thus establishing the basis of our influence in the empire.

Tea was rapidly imported into England, and in the year 1689 a duty of five shillings per pound was for the first time levied on it by His Majesty's Customs. The celebrated Canton silks and other valuable products of this hitherto little known empire speedily found their way into our market.

As we near Canton the first sign which attracts our attention is the ever-moving panorama of ships, junks and *sampans* in endless variety—large trading junks with their high gaudily-embellished sterns, low bows and huge mat sails, and clumsy-looking house-boats, with moveable bamboo hoods, which make trips inland to Fatshan, being able through their light draft to ascend shallow channels and creeks where no other craft could go. Darting about here there and everywhere are the small shoe-shaped sampans conveying passengers. These boats and many others are sculled by coquettish young damsels whose shrill voices can be heard from afar as they glide laughingly along, ever ready with a joke or a pert reply.

Further on and near the shore are the celebrated "flower-boats" which are hired by wealthy merchants and mandarins for evening banquets and parties. On these occasions the boats are decked with vari-coloured transparent lanterns, made of paper or glass, flags and pennants; while deeply-rouged damsels sing songs of love and chivalry in a high falsetto voice to the accompaniment of silken-stringed lutes, gongs and other unmelodious instruments.

A large percentage of the enormous population live and die on the river. From infancy, male and female alike, they are taught to manipulate the *yuhloa* and oar, while the mother and father attend to domestic affairs or look to the sails. These boat-people are an independent and thrifty set who live on a little rice, fish and vegetable flavoured with common white samshoo: the entire cost of an adult's board for one month not often exceeding two dollars. In the Canton River there are regular floating villages solely composed of hundreds of boats moored head and stern in long lines, so as to allow room for the traffic. And there hundreds of people live happily—except when a *typhoon* happens to come that way. Then there is much wailing and drowning. But the "big-wind" does not often come: and when it does the missing ones are not noticed much in that ever-increasing multitude. Still further up the busy river and beyond the Shameen, where the European residents reside, is the far-famed Puntinqua garden, several acres in extent, which is well worth visiting. Here may be seen the wonders of landscape gardening for which the Chinese are justly celebrated—miniature lakes half-hidden by water-lilies, and spanned by quaint and fantastic bridges, shady groves and winding paths embowered in flowery foliage, dwarfed trees of every description, terraces and creeper-covered pavilions and artistic rock-work with here and there a small three-storied pagoda or liliputian temple. The fragrant *mak-li* or Jasmine flowers, planted around a little joss-house on an artificial island in the lake diffuse their fragrant perfume, pleasing the senses while the eye is enchanted by the quiet and sylph-like scene.

Here we may rest and think at leisure, letting our imagination run riot among the wonders which here abound. Looking back over a vista of years, we picture to ourselves the merchant prince of a bygone day wandering among the silent splendour of these archaic haunts with some favoured "barbarian" from the far-away land in the "Great Western Sea." I magine them in those days, when a halo of mystery surrounded these distant shores, sitting together in yonder crumbling but romantic summer-house sipping a cup of the much-prized *cha* (tea) while the host, with an eye to business, expatiated even eloquently upon the virtues of that soothing beverage.

As in most other Chinese cities, the streets of Canton are built to exclude the fierce rays of a tropical sun and are seldom more than twelve feet in breadth, while the numerous stalls and protruding shop-counters tend to make them still narrower—hence the nauseating odours which assail our fastidious noses as we pick our way carefully along these narrow and slippery thoroughfares where filth and garbage are distributed freely and seldom cleared away, except by the forces of nature. Lean wolfish-looking "wonks" or low-caste dogs hail our approach with howls of disapproval followed by sundry snarls and snaps which are anything but reassuring, being somewhat suggestive of hydrophobia.

The streets are crowded with all sorts and conditions of men; and no order or regularity is observed among them—half-naked coolies bearing handsome green-covered chairs of high officials, and shabby ones—the former often preceded by a retinue of ragbedizened Yâmen runners, soldiers and loafers—working coolies scantily covered and bearing heavy loads on either end of a bamboo which is balanced on the shoulder; respectable citizens sauntering along with enviable imperturbation, seemingly indifferent to sounds and odours, constantly fanning themselves; hawkers with their wares, making a great noise which no one takes any notice of; and last but by no means least, the inevitable beggars, many of them lepers. These mendicants seem bent on annoying every one and anyone indiscriminately and levying tribute from the entire population. A batch of these surly rogues march into a shop and stand wailing and moaning in front of the counter. No one thinks of driving them out; and at length the shopkeeper mildly expostulates by throwing them a few copper cash. Then they curse his illiberality and visit his neighbour.

Large signboards are suspended outside the shops where all manner of curioes may be bought at a reasonable price, if the buyer is acquainted with the *modus operandi* of purchasing from these wily "Celestials." You must always by word, look and gesture depreciate the goods you desire to purchase; and when the seller states his price you must laugh him to scorn and offer him one quarter of the amount asked. He will then slowly and systematically, for time is no object to a Chinaman, beat the price

back to half. Then you split the difference. He will smile nonchalantly, shrug his shoulders and say "No can." You shrug yours, say "marskee" and walk away—don't look back, though. He won't let you go far before you hear his voice; and as you reluctantly return he will smile again and say "Can do, one dolla." Then give him ninety cents and go your way. You will be satisfied and will look so. So will he be satisfied and have reason to be – but he won't show it.

Among the sights of Canton, the temples take a prominent place and are very interesting. The most noteworthy of them is the Temple of the "Five Hundred Gods"—called by the Chinese Fan Lum Sze—which is situated in the western suburbs and consists of a number of stately halls where a variety of enthroned deities, five hundreds of them, preside in all the gilded pomp and magnificence befitting these satirical effigies of the great Buddhist worthies and religious fanatics of historical and mythological renown.

While passing through the seemingly lifeless streets of the Tartar Quarter we come to the handsome Bell Temple or Temple of the Five Genii. "This institution, being well endowed, and also supported by considerable subscriptions among the Tartar military officials, is kept in better order than most of the temples within the city. After traversing the usual quadrangle in front a flight of steps is reached, above which a highly ornamental gateway was built in 1842 from funds contributed by the celebrated Ki-ying, the Imperial Commissioner for foreign affairs. In addition to the main hall containing an image of the Supreme Divinity of the Taoust faith, there are lateral enclosures each containing separate places of worship. The principal "sights" connected with this Temple were until lately its gigantic bell, and the stone images of five (supernatural) rams, but these latter were destroyed in a conflagration which consumed the rear building in which they stood some three years since. The legend with reference to the foundation of this Temple is that, some twenty centuries ago, five shepherds were seen on the site where the building now stands, who suddenly became transformed into an equal number of rams, while these again instantly changed into stone, a voice being heard at the same time pro-

claiming that, so long as these supernatural objects should be worshipped on this spot, the prosperity of the adjoining city should endure. From that day forward (runs the story) these images have remained on the identical spot, and it is certain that from time immemorial they have been looked upon with superstitious reverence; nor is it the less remarkable that the destruction of their shrine should coincide so closely with the actual decline in the prosperity of the city. The stones were almost shapeless blocks of granite, about eighteen inches high and the same in length, with some rude attempt at sculpture in the form of a ram's head. From them and their attendant legend Canton derived its soubriquet of the city of Rams, but the legend itself is traced by Chinese philosophers to an accidental resemblance between the word signifying "ram" or "sheep" and the ancient designation of the province of Kwang-tung. This is a striking corroboration of Professor Müller's dictum that all myths are merely amplifications of some forgotten sound.

Immediately in front of the building in which these mystic stones were preserved stands a remarkable pile of masonry traversed by an archway some 20 feet in height and open at the crown in the centre, above which, from lofty rafters supported by pillars placd on the top of the arch-way, hangs an enormous bell. This was cast and placed in its present position, it is believed, some two centuries ago, but in consequence of a prophecy which was uttered at the time, foretelling calamity to Canton whenever this bell should give forth sound, it was deprived of a clapper and all means of access to it were removed. The knowledge of this prophecy served to bring about its fulfilment. When the bombardment of the defences of Canton took place in 1857, prior to the capture of the city, it was suggested to the commander of one of H. M's. ships to aim a shot at this bell, and the result was that, while calamity was indeed befalling the haughty city, the bell, struck by a cannon-ball, boomed forth its unwonted sound. The effects of the shot are seen in the fracture of the lower rim of the bell. Immediately beneath it is placed a large iron censer, in which incense, offered to the spirit of the bell, is kept constantly burning.

On the east of the main hall is a small enclosure surrounding a pond, on the red sandstone floor of which is seen the shape of a gigantic foot, declared by the priests to be the impress left by the divine Buddha; and on the opposite side down a flight of steps is the shrine of Golden Flowers, where the deity who corresponds in China to the Venus Genitrix of Rome is besought to bless mothers with offspring. Images of the hand-maidens of this benign goddess are placed in shrines on both sides of the temple, each holding one or more newly born infants upon her knee. Mothers making vows or prayers before a particular image are accustoned to tie a piece of red cord around the figure of one of the infants in token of their wish. At the head of the enclosure is placed a small building containing an image of the mighty Kwan, the God of War. His frowning visage, and bow and sword suspended by the altar indicates the martial character of the idol. Here the Tartar aspirants for promotion make sacrifice before appearing at the examinations."

From an architectural point of view the official residences are well worth visiting. But it is not easy to gain admission to a Yâmen—unless the "great man" is absent. Then by a judiciously bestowed "cumshaw" his underlings or runners will show you round. These residences are easily distinguished by their high triple gateways outside of which numerous proclamations and orders are posted up. On entering, the visitor passes several courtyards the sides of which are lined with the servants offices and rooms; then come the reception rooms, tribunal, private apartments and treasury. But we have no time for more sight-seeing now; we must hurry down to the landing-stage or we shall lose the Hongkong boat.

A RIVER SCENE.

XXVII.—MAN-MO TEMPLE, AND PROCESSION.

AT the western end of Hollywood Road, in Hongkong, and on the left-hand side, stands a temple called the Man-mo which was originally—at least, before the occupation of the island—a shrine where poor fishermen and travellers in that locality used to pay their respects and make their humble offerings to the God of the Fishermen and other deities there.

It had latterly fallen into an almost ruinous state, and in the middle of 1893 a subscription was made amongst the native population of the colony to effect repairs, rebuild a portion of this fane, and add an extra sanctuary to it. The money having been liberally supplied for this purpose,* the work was commenced, and was completed for the China New Year in 1894. The old temple now looked really imposing — its interior resplendent with huge brass vessels, incense brasiers, giant candlesticks, all highly polished, banners, scrolls and other ecclesiastical ornaments; and the exterior magnificently and tastefully embellished with square-shaped panels of artistically-moulded scenes comprising animals, mountains, lakes, bridges, temples and palaces, all done in plaster and afterwards carefully painted over with specially prepared pigments, which resist the action of wind and weather for ages. The roof was covered with quaint and elaborate designs after the same style but on a much larger scale.

* As is customary, each subscriber received a round paper lantern which he burned for three nights outside his shop or residence to propitiate the Gods who are supposed to reward his generosity when they see his receipt-light.

In celebration of this important event in the history of the temple, and to propitiate and congratulate its deities, another large fund was raised among the Chinese for the purpose of having a grand pageant and erecting a reception-house for the mighty Sky Dragon who would come down on earth to see the improvements made in the temple.

Great preparations went forward, and a magnificent spectacle was eagerly anticipated—thousands of sight-seers crowding into the colony from Canton and all parts of the surrounding country.

Outside the temple piles of long poles and bamboos of all sizes and lengths were brought—the former being fantastically painted in various bright-hued designs. With these a lofty scaffolding was soon raised to a height of one hundred or more feet, as the Chinese are particularly dexterous and rapid in this work. When this gigantic though fragile looking framework was complete, huge chests full of light mat-work panels, ornamented with effectively painted designs, appeared on the scene. These were soon emptied and the contents taken aloft and fitted, each into its proper place, forming a complete and gorgeous covering and lining for the framework—thus transforming it into a fairy-like fane of enormous dimensions from the roof of which flower-decked crystal chandeliers and silken-tasselled lamps of all sizes and descriptions, and highly embellished clock-work models with moving figures, were suspended. Round the walls of the interior costly scrolls, some of great antiquity and value, pictures by native painters and autograph verses and proverbs by famed poets, philosophers and dignitaries, were hung in artistic profusion.

In the centre and at the corners of the enclosure were ornamental stands for the musicians, around which were placed cage with bright-plumaged birds and pots of choice flowers and plants—many containing complete miniature trees, curiously stunted, and other cultivated freaks of nature.

At the beginning of the First Moon, in our February, festivities commenced in earnest. A splendid procession, costing thousands of dollars, was formed. It was fully a mile in length and passed through every thoroughfare in the colony. First came the musicians headed by an enormous drum, beating cymbals and

gongs and playing flutes, trumpets and other instruments too numerous and noisy to mention; then came hundreds of standard and screen bearers with vari-coloured silken banners, followed by gorgeously-appareled boys bearing arms and trophies. After these came fantastic stands with artificial trees upon whose branches were fixed young and beautiful girls in silk and satin star-spangled robes to represent heroines of history and romance. Behind these little "Celestial" demoiselles came the younger sons of Han, also exquisitely dressed, carrying spears and bows and mounted on gaily-caparisoned ponies which were led by male attendants clad in red cloth and bunting. Following these were miniature temples with clockwork figures, the former being made with remarkable skill and ornamented with the highly-prized plumage of the kingfisher. Behind these came miniature "flower-boats" each with its complement of enchanting damsels; and in their rear came huge monsters—animals with moving jaws and wagging tails, pursued by a number of half-human monstrosities with animal and reptile heads of great size, accompanied by boisterous clowns and lithsome acrobats who pleased the public greatly.

Following these were more musicians, models, figures, soldiers and standard-bearers; and finally the "Sky Dragon" himself appeared in all its pomp and splendour—with jaws distended and glaring red eyeballs rolling in a fierce and truly hideous manner about their wide sockets. This monster was constructed with wonderful ingenuity—its scaly body, nearly two hundred yards in length, and about five feet in breadth, was made with silver paper; and on either side the forms of the numerous bearers were partially hidden by folds of yellow bunting, only their legs being visible as they carried it along, from time to time being relieved by relays of strong coolies.

Onward went the gigantic monster, its side-bells ringing and its myriad of legs scuffling along, to the intense delight of the spectators upon whose closely-packed heads one could have easily walked for miles, so dense was the crowd.

In front of the advancing dragon, danced two energetic harlequins carrying long ball-mounted poles with which they were supposed to direct the movements of this unearthly prodigy whose

immense horned head moved impetuously from side to side in a most diabolical manner which must have impressed the awe-inspired spectators with its power and majesty; for they followed its every movement with staring eyes and gaping mouths. It was a sight they would never forget and might never see again.

In D'Aguilar Street some thrifty housewife had hung her washing out of a front window to dry; and as the procession advanced towards the house a great cry of rage and indignation was raised. The vast concourse came to a standstill and every eye was angrily fixed upon those fluttering clothes aloft there. They were a dastardly insult to the dignity and power of the mighty Sky Dragon and those accompanying it, and an omen of bad luck; and the procession could and would not proceed until they had been removed.

The poor guilty woman was nearly frightened out of her senses and wept bitterly that she should have thoughtlessly offended so great a deity. It is needless to say that her washing was soon taken in, and the procession moved on its course—the dragon's legs seeming to move all the merrier for the short rest.

The poor country folk were simply wonderstruck—they had never beheld or even imagined anything so grand and beautiful before; and would remember it to the end of their days. But the greatest surprise of all had been prepared for the evening. On the newly reclaimed spare ground facing the harbour, another lofty scaffolding had been raised, and this was covered from head to foot with every conceivable kind of firework. A spacious stand had been prepared for His Excellency the Governor, Sir William Robinson and Lady Robinson, and the Chief English and Chinese officials.

Early in the evening a steady stream of people began to pour from every quarter of the city, and by eight o'clock there were upwards of two hundred thousand people assembled there—lining the broad bund and its approaches, from east to west, and appropriating every inch of the reclamation ground. It was a dark night, and fortunately continued so.

At 9 p.m. the fireworks were lighted—rockets soared, hissing upward, forming arbours in the sky, while others shot up between

THE MAN-MO TEMPLE. HONGKONG.

them dispersing their brilliant fire-flowers far above; and catherine wheels revolved like golden watermills, showering their gittering spray around and dazzling the enchanted eye. Then a great, deep, trembling murmur of intense wonder and admiration arose above the loud-sounding music and musketry. From seaward there now came a fleet of fairy-like boats. One mass of gorgeous, quivering light, from innumerable lanterns, drifted nearer and nearer; and the soft music of many lutes came shoreward over the water, making merry company.

The wondering crowd had hardly got accustomed to this new sight, when the deafening din of gongs, bells and timbrels again attracted every eye to the eastward whence there came a multitude of sea-monsters, making a grand display. Fishes of every size and description were there, from a whale to a tiny sprat: all moving most naturally along in a line which seemed to have no end. They were all lighted up inside, being made of transparent oiled paper, and really had a remarkably lifelike appearance and excited universal admiration from Chinese and Europeans alike. Behind these came the old dragon which was also illuminated from head to tail; and the whole procession took more than an hour to pass a certain point.

All in that mighty multitude of spectators seemed remarkably quiet and well behaved and much merriment prevailed. For three or four days the procession moved about, gradually dwindling in length and grandeur until is was no more. Then the well-pleased people, after paying a farewell visit to the Man-mo temple to make their little thank-offerings and view the alterations, dispersed to their respective homes after an enjoyable outing.

XXVIII.—THE GREAT PLAGUE OF HONGKONG.

DURING the latter part of April 1894, we heard in Hongkong that a strange and dreadful disease had broken out in Canton, whose inhabitants suddenly became panic-stricken and fled to Hongkong in thousands—every steamer arriving from there being crowded each trip, until the colony was densely packed with them. Then the startling news was spread abroad that the death-dealing pestilence—in all respects analogous to the Great Plague of London in 1665 and 66—was in our midst.

At first, however, it was merely a rumour, then it was confirmed by the announcement that a couple of deaths had occurred from plague in Taipinshan, situated in the west end of the city. But very little notice was taken of, or credence given to these reports, and no measures were taken to prevent the epidemic from spreading or to stop the inrush of natives from the affected districts. They continued to pour into the doomed colony which was just beginning to feel the oppressive warmth of a tropical summer. The foreigners resident there resented and ridiculed the idea of an epidemic invading or seriously endangering Hongkong—or even finding a sure foot-hold there. And, in spite of repeated warnings from more than one lip and more than one pen, for some time a sense of security and immunity from all danger was felt. This was altogether unjustifiable and fatal—as was soon amply demonstrated by Death in its most awful form.

The hidden depths of disgraceful insanitation were about to be revealed when too late to rectify or avert the resulting calamity and sacrifice—the human sacrifice imposed by the accumulated

filth of many money-making years, during which time the lower classes of Chinese householders must have been treated by the Sanitary Inspectors with somewhat remarkable deference, leading to culpable neglect.

As is generally the case, when the tide of this hitherto wealthy colony was, financially and socially, at its lowest ebb, there was a freshet—a freshet of pestilence, which carried death, destruction and disgrace with its foul overwhelming tide. All the world now held aloof, and wondered.

During the notable epidemic, known as the "Black Death" of 1348 and 49 which—originating in Asia, and sweeping westward to the countries of Europe, laid its decimating scourge upon London—we read that two hundred persons were buried in the Charterhouse daily. Even at that period, compare the population and area of London with those of Hongkong, and then imagine the hold which this dire disease must have had upon the colony, when over a hundred deaths from it occurred daily—until so many victims awaited interment that the dead could hardly be disposed of.

It was in every respect similar to the plague alluded to in eloquent language by Boccacio in his introduction to the "Decameron"—and his description of it will give the reader a far better and more correct idea of what it was like in Hongkong, and of its ravages, than anything I could write.

For some little time the infectious disease was confined to the western end of the colony; and, when too late, a cordon of British soldiers was drawn across Tapingshan to prevent the contagion spreading; and hopes were entertained that, with the first good shower of rain—as there had been a long period of drought—it would entirely disappear. The rain came and went, but the plague remained. It doggedly dodged from one street to another, si'ently, surely and fatally, creeping along in every direction, north, south, east and west. Then it met at the corners—and finally encompassed the whole colony; locking it and its terrified inhabitants up in a cold grasp of sudden death from which there seemed no escape, as the ships no longer came there and all trade had ceased. Everyone expected death, and sat awaiting it—and it came.

A poor lean rat would creep out on the floor before you, and

overcome with the disease, stagger and fall; then drag itself a little further away from its untenable hole, a little nearer you, as if for company, and die almost at your feet. That poor little thing was the first harbinger of death—a sure sign that the pestilence was stealing into your house; and you could not shut it out. Who would be the first? That was the awful question; and you all gathered together, and watched one another, looking for the first dreaded symptoms—a slight feeling of diziness and faintness.

As this pestilence gradually gained way, the streets began to grow lonely, the shops were closed and blinds drawn down; and anon the sound of mourning was heard. At last only a few nervous and affrighted people darted here and there, or a corpse was carried out of a house. Perhaps a mangy dog, picking about the garbage in the gutters, suddenly started instinctively back as it came upon one of its kind wreathing about in spasmodic convulsions, jerking its poor head against the kerbstone, and foaming at the mouth which was snapping in the last agonies of a ghastly death that frightened the other scared creature, which scampered away down the deserted street, running from death that was at work on either side.

Those who were able to fled from the colony, before it was too late and those who could not, went to their homes. Servants left their places and hurried off to join their families before death dispersed them. Two of my own servants went home and died: and several rats came out in my rooms all of which died from the plague—I buried them at once and took every precaution, burning sulphur and sandalwood continually, and using plenty of carbolic acid and chloryde of lime. But my wife and I fully expected every moment to be stricken with it, as I had marked symptoms and was very ill with a large boil for some time.

But in the midst of all this misery, desolation and death, some few heroic men worked and toiled for suffering humanity. The people of Hongkong—Europeans and Chinese alike—will never forget and may well be proud of the noble christian men who fearlessly and faithfully tended the sick and comforted and assisted the grieved and afflicted during that great crisis. I am speaking

of Doctors Cantlie and Lowson both of whom attended daily at the bedsides of plague-stricken natives.

Dr. Cantlie was absent on a holiday, at Pekin, when the epidemic broke out, but he at once hurried back directly he heard of it. Many a day have I met him hurrying along through the death-haunted streets, fearlessly going into the worst places and houses—into the most filthy dens of disease, where the pestilence was raging with dreadful potency—to tend poor penniless people from whom he would take no fee, whom he helped out of his own purse and provided with medicines. If ever a man deserved to receive the honour of knighthood, he does. * Very few know the extent of his noble and high-minded magnanimity and unselfishness; and I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere appreciation and regard for his chivalrous and heroic conduct in befriending and saving the lives of hundreds of poor friendless people. I trust that this may be the means of bringing the exemplary conduct of these two gentlemen more fully before the attention of the high authorities; as so many worthy but unassuming heroes get unwittingly passed by.

Our English soldiers there also acted splendidly throughout: and went through some really dangerous and fulsome work. Many Chinese hid the bodies of their deceased relatives away in the houses so as to avoid the premises being cleaned and disinfected and the accumulated filth of years cleared away. In consequence search parties had to be organized to enter every house, and hundreds of corpses were found secreted in this manner and were buried. Great piles of refuse and garbage were cleaned out from some houses, that must have taken years to collect, where the germs of disease were cultivated. And the soldiers came forward and volunteered to clean the city out, when no one else would venture even near or in the vicinity of a plague-stricken house. One noble young British officer, whose name I am ashamed to say I have forgotten, fell a victim to the plague—sacrificing his promising life for the sake of the colony: he died after a hard day's work with his men.

At first these poor fellows suffered terribly from heat, thirst

* Dr. Cantlie has recently returned to London.

and fatigue; and several being stricken with the disease, I wrote the following letter which appeared in the columns of the *Hongkong Daily Press.*

TOMMY ATKINS AND SANITARY WORK. TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

Sir—I do not altogether consider it right and expedient that our European soldiers in Hongkong should be allowed to further expose themselves to the plague, especially since one of them has already caught this terrible disease, by carrying out the sanitary operations—removing dirt, furniture, and even dead bodies with their own hands. The work would be equally well done if it were merely superintended by a European, the manual labour being performed by hired coolies, or even by the Indian rather than the European soldiers. It is not difficult to imagine how volunteers are so easily obtained from any regiment. The captain, supported by his officers, calls out a company and then informs them that volunteers are required for certain work; those who will volunteer must step three paces to the front—or something of that sort. The consequence is that the men do not like to hang back, as they naturally enough suppose that those who do will be "marked men." One can picture the company drawn up facing the officers. Volunteers are called for. For a few minutes ominous silence prevails. The sergeant feels very uncomfortable; he looks at his comrades and steps forward; they follow like men and true Britishers whatever the odds may be. But this is not right and fair, nor is it wise and expedient.

There is an advertisement in the papers for volunteers. It is very doubtful whether they are to be had for the glory of the thing. But there are plenty of able men (men I have seen and spoken to) who would undertake the sanitary work at once if they were moderately well paid for the trouble and risk.—I am, sir, yours faithfully.

C. J. H. H.

Hongkong, 30th May, 1894.

P.S.—Three more unfortunate soldiers have been attacked with dangerous symptoms, and there is no wonder that such is the sad

case when we consider the scandalous treatment these unfortunate men are evidently subjected to. Those who are selected for this special sanitary duty are marched out of barracks before 7 a.m., after a frugal meal, and on their arrival at the Tung Wah Hospital receive orders for the day. No conveyance is provided for them. The poor fellows are advised to smoke tobacco and take a little stimulant; but none is provided for them. They are left to work like slaves and gasp for some stimulant to help them through their arduous and unhealthy duties. I am not writing this from imagination; I have made enquiries from a gentleman working with them and have myself seen the men at work. No wonder that the poor fellows look so pale, fagged out, and miserable. All the refreshment that is provided at the hospitable Tung Wah headquarters is a large bottle of water. It is a crying shame that these hard-working helpless men, who are heroically exposing their lives for the benefit of the community, should be treated in this manner.

C. J. H. H.

After this the men were more hospitably treated by the community in general, and were also better and more appropriately equipped and provided for against the dangers and hardships they heroically encountered while performing these exceptionally obnoxious though, be it said to their credit, self-imposed duties. And in reply the following courteous letter was written by Lieutenant Colonel Robinson, June 2nd 1894.

THE S. L. I. AND THE PLAGUE. TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

DEAR SIR.—Will you kindly insert the enclosed letter, as I have noticed one or two slight errors in letters and also one in your issue of to-day. As regards my men and officers, and what is going on, I shall be glad to furnish all information to any of the papers that they may ask for to assist them in their reports.—Yours truly.

F. W. ROBINSON.
Lt. Col.
Com. 1st Shropshire L. Infantry

(*Enclosure.*)

With reference to recent correspondence in the papers in connection with the plague, including a letter in the *Daily Press* 31/5/94, signed by "C. J. H. H.," which is evidently written in a friendly spirit towards the men engaged in sanitary work, I may state that the work done by the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and men of the S. L. I. is purely voluntary in the true sense of the word. When I was first informed on Tuesday, 22nd May, by H. E. the G. O. Commanding, that our services might be required, I told my men on parade that we might be called upon to assist in stamping out the plague. The following morning at 10 a.m., I received a letter asking for 4 Officers, 150 N.C O. and men, at 1 p.m and for 150 the following day at 7 a.m. There was no parade to call for volunteers, but in each Company the men were asked by the Colour Sergeants if they wished to go. Some few who did not feel well did not volunteer, but the great majority did and I have been able to furnish the party required from five Companies without interfering with men employed in special garrison or regimental duties. Those who volunteered were inspected by the Medical Officers, and only those in good health were allowed to go.

Since the commencement of the work, several men have had to go sick; their places have been filled up by volunteers from other Companies, and I am quite sure both officers and men will carry on the work in the same spirit as they have begun, though it is rather heartbreaking to all of us that up to the present there has not been the slightest attempt on the part of landlords or tenants to assist the authorities in cleansing their houses.

With reference to the statement in to-day's *Daily Press* mentioning that I refused to allow my men to have any refreshment, it is not correct, as the following fact will show.

On the 22nd May I specially mentioned in writing to H.E. the General Officer Commanding, who asked me for suggestions, that if my men were employed I stipulated that they should have a supper supplied every evening as part of any remuneration they might get, as I considered the nature of the work would require the men to be well fed, and my reason for asking for the supper

was that the men going out early get their ordinary breakfast of tea or coffee, bread, and steak, before starting, while the second shift get their dinner. On the 30th May, Mr. Francis asked me if it was true that my men got unlimited liquor supplied while at work, as the representative of the *China Mail* had been to ask him. I informed him that it was not the case and that I objected to their being given unlimited beer or spirits while at work. I may further add that since this work began I have not had a single man commit himself in any way. On the 31st May, I received the following letter from Mr. Francis, offering coffee for the men while at work which I gladly accepted, as I consider coffee better than beer or spirits for them, especially in the early morning, and established coffee depôts at the Tung Wah Hospital and No. 5 Police Station Central, and the men were supplied with hot coffee throughout the day. Mr. Francis had also arranged for hot coffee, and he is now carrying out the arrangements.

I also suggested two ounces of cheese a man to add to their breakfasts, as several men said they would prefer it to their regular steak sometimes. This has also been given. The coffee was thoroughly appreciated yesterday, also the cigars and tobacco.

The men are now receiving a tot of rum a day, which they carry in their waterbottles, a gift from the agent for contractor of Government supplies, and when that is finished it will be continued by a gift from Messrs. Caldbeck, Macgregor & Co. of 10 doz. whisky; and I consider I am justified in using it for the men as I think best. My Quarter Master (Lieut. Wilson) has taken a great deal of trouble to find out the men's wishes as regards the extras in the way of food, tobacco, and cigars, &c.

I think most people will agree with me that I am working and looking after the welfare of my men, and certainly do not object to any amount of extras for them, if of the right sort and issued in a suitable way

But if the Authorities wish to give stimulants, I am sure it would be best to give the beer to the men on their return in the afternoon. Every man has $1\frac{1}{3}$ pints porter daily from War Department Stores for Id. at noon.

In all my arrangements for the welfare of the men I have

consulted the medical officers, who have given me every assistance.

My officers and men are working willingly and cheerfully, as any one (who sees them) can testify. But I say most emphatically unless the inhabitants of the plague-stricken houses are compulsorily cleared out and put into matsheds for about three weeks and kept apart from others, and the houses then aired and purified as ordered by the Sanitary Committee, all cocklofts being pulled down and not allowed to be put up again, the plague will go on all the summer, and our work and that of many others will be practically thrown away, as well as much money lost to the Colony.

It is impossible to do all the houses, but certainly when cleansing houses where cases of the plague have occurred every cockloft should be removed, so as to prevent overcrowding and the recurrence of the disease.

At present the people go back to their houses as soon as cleansed; and cases of the plague again occur, frequently in the same house.

If isolation is carried out in airy matsheds somewhere to the west of the town I think the plague would gradually subside.

In conclusion I am very glad to see that the recommendation of H.E. the Major-General Commanding the Troops has now been acted upon for reducing the number of men to be daily employed, giving them a day off and emplying them superintending, instead of actually doing the work, leaving the latter to be done by Chinese labour under their supervision.

F. W. Robinson, Lt. Col.
Com. 1st Shropshire L. I.

2nd June, 1894.

The symptoms of this fatal bubonic disease were exactly similar to those described by the ancient writers, Guy de Chauliac, Gentilis of Foligno and others, being manifested by a feeling of faintness, sometimes accompanied by blood-spitting, and always with high fever which remained throughout; then glandular swellings, which were very tender, came generally under the armpit or in the groin. After death the body turned black, decomposition setting in at once. But in very virulent cases I have seen men suddenyl

struck down in the street. The victim would stagger, like a drunken man, and fall—gasping for breath, and foaming at the mouth; and would frequently die before the hospital could be reached.

As all the hospitals soon became overcrowded with plague patients, mat-sheds had to be erected for their reception and treatment. At last, however, after thousands had been swept away, the colony began to shake itself free. Slowly and surely the dire pestilence was driven away, being met and courageously grappled with by the army of young English military volunteers who gallantly rose to the occasion and, acting the part of scavengers and heroes, routed out and burned tons and tons of filth and rubbish which had been accumulating for years. After the subtle poison in the air had sufficiently expended itself and was not further impregnated with exhalations from the putrid ground and the dirt-heaps covering it—hot-beds where the atomic germs had developed and multiplied—the epidemic began to abate. And by the month of August the colony and its inhabitants once more assumed its wonted appearance. But they had learned a lesson from experience which will not easily be forgotten.

XXIX. MATCH-LABEL COLLECTING.

FOR some time past match-label collecting has been a most popular hobby among Europeans in China—especially in Hongkong where some very fine and interesting collections have been made. Most of them come from Japan where there are hundreds of match factories, each with its own trade-mark; and even the retail dealers in them generally affix their respective labels.

There being a large export trade from Japan to China and the Straits Settlements in matches, comprising thousands of different labels, a choice collection can easily and cheaply be made in those places. In consequence they are eagerly sought for; and as new labels continually appear, one's collection soon runs into thousands. In fact it is quite possible to make an enormous and even a valuable portfolio in an incredibly short time, as there seems no end to these interesting stamps—particularly as old firms are continually dying out, shops being closed and new ones opened. Each match-maker tries to outvie the other with some uncommonly elaborate and suggestive design. These picturesque labels generally have relation to some Chinese or Japanese subject, characteristic of an incident or epoch in history, or point to some well-known fact or fable. As an instance we will take the following. The young and graceful damsel represented on label A. is known in Chinese history and poetry as Mo Quai-ying, and to some as Mouk Lan who greatly distinguished herself during the Tang dynasty. This famous and popular heroine frequently figures in Chinese plays, and her heroic deeds form the subject of numerous tales and ballads. In a poem supposed to have been written by the

heroine herself, who is described by poets and historians as having been not only a dutiful daughter but a beautiful and accomplished girl of remarkable courage and loyalty, we are first introduced to her at her father's house in Chefoo. She is weaving, and is so absorbed in thought that she does not hear the audible click of the loom and shuttle. The previous night she had read a war-placard in which the emperor summoned all his male subjects to fight against the invading Mongols. Her father's name was on the roll, but as he was an old man, far too old for the dangers and hardships of battle and had no son to fight in his stead, Quai-ying determined to go herself.

Having made this resolve, we are told in the poem that she purchased a fleet steed in the Eastern mart, a saddle in the Western one; in the Southern mart a bridle and in the Northern one a whip. One morning at dawn of day, she took tender leave of her beloved parents. Journeying throughout the day she arrived at "Wong Ho's" shore in the evening. She forded the river and travelling onward, arrived next day at the source of the Amur river. Here she joined the army and first heard the tramp of Mongol horse,

> "At the Great Wall their arms they snatch;
> They pass, like birds, the border line;
> The bleak airs pierce the steel-clad watch;
> The cold lights on their armour shine."

This border warfare continued for about ten years, and at last the Mongol invaders were driven back and their celebrated chieftain—the hero of a hundred stubborn fights—was slain by the intrepid Quai-ying who disguised as a man, fought so courageously that before the close of the war she became a great general.

Then she returned to the capital and the Emperor wished to load her with valuable presents and confer great honours upon her. But she only asked for swift-footed camels to bear her back home.

These were supplied, and the return journey commenced. At last, as she approached the familiar scenes of her childhood, she was met by her proud and loving parents who gave the long absent one a glorious welcome and provided a sumptuous feast.

She then went to her room and taking off her martial robes

again assumed the girlish clothes of olden days. Then she asked them to "dress at the glass her cloudy hair and deck it with rare flowers." This was done and, as a beautiful woman, she went forth to meet her soldier comrades who expressed their astonishment that, through all the years they had fought side by side, she had never betrayed her sex. Her reply is given in the last verse

"With hares the nimble buck may slide
The doe deceit and cunning show;
How, when a pair run side by side
Can you distinguish buck from doe."

One gentleman who during a trip round the world made a splendid collection of these match-labels, of all kinds and sizes, had written quite a little history beneath each specimen—the day he had found it, where found, under what circumstances and in some cases what the design alluded to. So that altogether they formed an interesting and remarkably artistic volume. He was very enthusiastic about it, and was quite charmed with the magnificent assortment he had gathered together in various parts of Japan, especially in Osaka where the best can be got; and in China—chiefly in Hongkong. One or two somewhat rare specimens come from Chefoo and Foochow—both of which I managed to procure. Another gentleman, a German Consul, declared that it was more interesting and far more exciting than collecting Postage Stamps. He had a large scrap-album filled with match labels—each one being carefully pasted in with a short inscription below. He could show thousands to my hundreds.

It is a wonder that match-label collecting has not become more popular among globe-trotters. I have known a resident in the "Celestial Empire" to make a trip across to the famed "Land of the Rising Sun" for the express purpose of procuring a few old and rare or exceptionally attractive specimens. And to hear him relate where and how he found them, in all manner of unlikely and inaccessible places, was really very amusing. I have myself spent many a pleasant afternoon and evening label-hunting in various parts of Honkong; but I should advise any traveller or resident in the far East who wishes to speedily and cheaply form a good groundwork for a collection, to go to some

MATCH LABELS.

(From the Author's collection.)

of the Chinese shops in Hollywood Road Hongkong, on the north side and close to the Alice Memorial Hospital; or to Chinese shops in Singapore. In front of these, placed on stalls, are to be found hundreds of very artistic varieties; but of course it is necessary to buy the box of matches which only costs 1 cent. The proper price which a native would pay is 3 copper cash—ten of which go to one cent—or forty to a penny. But the wily "Celestial" shopkeeper knows the popular mania, and ascertains at once the object of the buyer, wisely discriminating between the consumer, who generally requires a package, and the collector who only wants one box; and is very apt to charge accordingly. Trust a Chinaman for making the most of an opportunity, and he can hardly be blamed for doing so. One enterprising match seller in Hollywood Road Hongkong, placed in a conspicuous position outside his shop the following notice:

KLECTORS CAN BIE NUMBA ONE MATCH PIKTUR THIS SIDE
COME LOOK SEE.

When I am collecting match-stamps, I buy a packet of one dozen of the most attractive and artistic sort I can find, and, keeping a couple out of the lot, exchange the rest with other collectors for specimens I want. This is a plan I can highly recommend—being safe and economical. As it is always best to have a number of duplicates to exchange, I used to carry a pocket-book full of them about with me for this purpose, and gained a few rare patterns in this manner.

It is strange that match-label collecting is so little known and pursued in England, it would soon become an attractive pastime, particularly to globe-trotters; and would somewhat relieve the monotony of Postage Stamp Collecting. Therefore I shall feel amply repaid for thus endeavouring to advocate the pleasures of this comparatively unknown hobby, if it is the means of inducing and recommending it to my fellow countrymen abroad and at home. I may add that, to artists who make corner-piece etching for the magazines a speciality, a good collection of these labels would form an invaluable and exhaustless source from which to draw the most quaint and artistic designs.

XXX.—THE RULERS OF CHINA. *

WE can only liken the Manchoo-Tartar administration unto a huge octopus, its numberless feelers extending to the uttermost parts of the so-called "Celestial Empire," in the shape of avaricious time-serving mandarins, each one sucking away at the substance of the nation, cramming himself with ill-gotten gain, feeding the insatiable core at Pekin with the smallest percentage allowable, and keeping for himself as much as he possibly can keep with any degree of safety.

These mandarins receive only a nominal salary, but are given *carte blanche* to obtain unlimited emolument, which they most ingeniously contrive to do by submitting the unfortunate civilians to a system of undue taxation, or "squeezing," as it is very appropriately termed in "pidgin-English." As a writer on Chinese characteristics wisely observes: "No wonder the naturally astute Chinese appear so particularly cunning and deceitful to Europeans! The possession of money is a sure attraction for the mandarin vultures; so that, beyond the pale of the foreign settlements at the Treaty Ports, throughout the country every native merchant and civilian is bred up to habits of mendacity, and particularly to conceal his real income and condition."

In consequence of the unlimited power of these mandarins, most of whom are of Tartar extraction, China, under its present rulers, will never be a safe or fruitful field for missionary enterprise. Missionaries are regarded by these officials as the pioneers of

* This originally appeared in the columns of "St. Paul's", August 24th 1895.

civilization, and the harbingers of reform and enlightenment. They pave the way for commercial pursuits, and once the hated *fang-quai*—"foreign devil"—introduces the "barbarous" inventions of the West, the mandarin will no longer be able to levy his taxes and live in princely opulence on the ignorance and credulous stupidity of his servile subjects. So he teaches them to regard our ingenuity as witchcraft, to strenuously oppose the doctrines of our enterprising missionaries and to drive them from the land.

Most of the anti-foreign riots originate thus. Every high official is supposed to keep a certain number of well-trained soldiers ready for immediate service, if required, and he is allowed by the Government to withhold a large sum from the revenue for this express purpose. In nine cases out of ten, he keeps the necessary number of uniforms and arms, generally the most primitive weapons, bought by the gross as old iron, but dispenses with the soldiers, only retaining a limited staff for his yâmen, and pockets the amount that should be expended in their support. Should he be notified of a visit from some high official or censor, or be required to despatch a military expedition, against the Japanese, for instance, he sends out his petty mandarins, runners, and "braves" to raise a regiment, or even an army, as the case may require. This they do by pressing into the service a number of coolies, who are then equipped and driven away like sheep; and when sent to the front to face an enemy are verily butchered like them.

The further north an official is stationed the more soldiers he is obliged to keep; the reason of this is obvious, and requires no explanation. The pay of an ordinary Chinese soldier is from three to four Haikwan taels (about nine or twelve shillings) per month, out of which he must board himself. But by the time the money has filtered down through the fingers of the officials to the poor "brave" there is rarely more than a half left, if so much. He cannot obtain redress or even seek it without endangering his life, hence the many rebellions and resulting massacres we repeatedly hear of, especially in the north of China. The numerous secret societies are thus strengthened by the continuous enrolment of members inured to hardship and incensed against

their own Government, which they endeavour to drag into disgrace, disrepute, and degradation, and to finally overthrow, by raising against it the enmity of other nations. This they attain by committing the most heartrending atrocities, in which they are often countenanced, if not encouraged, by the local mandarins, who greatly fear the secret societies, and merely have their own interests at heart.

Every branch of civil, social, political, religious, and military organization in China has become so manifestly defiled since the advent of the Manchoo-Tartars that it is worse than useless for us or our zealous missionaries to think of rectifying or alleviating the evil. A complete change of dynasty seems the only efficient remedy, in fact, the only course that affords any prospect of peace and happiness for China, and for the safety and welfare of Europeans resident there. As the Chinese themselves sigh and say: China, when once more ruled by Chinese, will become a more prosperous, more civilized, and, in all probability, a Christianized country.

But, with regard to "Christianity," having seen much of the creeds and customs of Eastern nations, I consider it is presumptuous on our part to denominate a man "heathen" because he is not of the same religion as ourselves. I believe that, whether he be a disciple of Jesus Christ, or a disciple of Confucius, Buddha, or Mahomet, if he follows and observes the tenets of his faith, and acts according to the dictates of his conscience, he is on the right road. It seems absurd and uncharitable to think otherwise.

* * * * * * *

To my friends and readers I will now say *au revoir*—not good-bye. For I trust that we shall meet again some day, if not personally, in the pages of some future work. But the roving spirit is again growing upon me, and away on the remote horizon of my mind the peaceful valleys and endless hills—stretching away to the world's end as it were—tempt me to once more turn my eyes towards the mystic Southern Cross.

Some are free, unfettered and restless, others do not cherish

this hope-shattered life too dearly, and not a few wish to forget *what might have been* and to bury remembrance for ever in Lethean fields of fame. To those I say come and wander where you will to your very hearts content. Rub the rust from your gun and revolver, roll up your tent like an Arab and as silently steal away with me to those far-off sunny regions where the broad Pacific breaks. There you will learn that there are things more lasting and glorious than the lingering pressure of a shapely hand, and joys more real and thrilling than a love-impassioned caress. There we shall find matter for many and many a volume of poetry or prose. And when you see the vast mountains looming away in long futurity, and you know that the shady valleys lie far beyond, you will look fixedly ahead and, pushing ever onward, forget the past and present alike in dreams of the great Some Day.

THE END.

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